TWO MITES:

OR,

A GRATEFULL Acknowledgement

OF

GOD's Singular Goodneſſe.

In two SERMONS

Preached by NATH: HARDY, Maſter of Arts, and Miniſter of the Goſpel, in S. *Dionis Back-Church*, *Aug.* 7. and 14. 1653. Occaſioned by his late unexpected Recovery of a deſperate Sickneſs.

ISA. 38. 17,18,19.

Behold for Peace, I had great bitterneſſe, but thou haſt in love to my ſoule, delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou haſt caſt all my ſinnes behinde thy back.

For the grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee, they that go downe into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

The living, The living, he ſhall praiſe thee, as I doe this day.

AUG. Ep. 77. ad AUREL:

Nam quid melius & animo geramus, & ore promamus, & calamo exprimamus, quam Deo gratias, hoc nec dici brevius, nec audiri lætius, nec intelligi gratius, nec agi fructuoſius poteſt.

LONDON,

Printed by *F. G.* for *Nath: Web* and *Will: Grantham*, at the *Black Beare* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, neere the little North-Doore. 1653.

Mercy in her Beauty:

OR,

THE HEIGHT OF A DELIVERANCE *FROM THE* DEPTH OF DANGER.

Set forth in the first SERMON *Preached upon that Occasion,*

By NATH: HARDY, Master of Arts, and Preacher to the Parish of S. *Dionis Back-Church.*

PSAL. 118. 17, 18, 19.

I shall not die, but live, and declare the Works of the Lord.

The Lord hath chastened me very sore, but he hath not given me over to death.

Open unto me the gates of righteousnesse, I will goe into them, and I will praise the Lord.

Basil. Mag. Hom. 9.

Δεῖ ἡμᾶς μὴ ἐκκακεῖν ἐν τοῖς θλίψεσιν ἀλλ' ἀναμένειν τὴν ἀγαθόλιψια τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Aug. in Psal. 41.

Quia magis crebra sunt mala, dulcior erit misericordia tua. Etenim scriptum est quodam loco Speciosa misericordia Domini in tempore tribulationis, sicut nubes pluviæ in tempore siccitatis.

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To the *Right Worſhipfull, Worſhipfull,* and *Wel-beloved,* The Inhabitants of the *Pariſh* of S. *Dionis Back-Church, Health* and *Wealth,* not *only in* this life, *but* chiefly *in that which is to come.*

Worthy Friends,

IT *is a full* Decade *of* yeers *ſince I firſt was* called *by* Divine *Providence to* begin *the* work *of my* Miniſtry *among* you: *and it is not yet* half *ſo many* months, *ſince in* humane *probability both my* Miniſtry *and* life *ſeemed to be at an* end: *But the wiſe and gracious* God (*in whoſe* hands *all our* times *are*) *hath mercifully* lengthned *my* dayes (bleſſed be his name) *for the greater* good *of my* own, *and* (*I* hope) *of* your ſouls. *Pſal.* 31. 15.

Theſe Sermons *which upon this comfortable* occaſion *I lately* preached, *were by ſome of you* deſired *to be made* more publique, *which I have* fulfilled, *ſo much the more* willingly, *that I might* teſtifie *before the* world, firſt, *my infinite* obligation *to Almighty* God *for ſo remarkeable a* deliverance; *and withall my manyfold* engagements *to a great part of* you *for your affectionate* love, *and multiplyed* courteſies.

And now (my Dearely Beloved, and longed for in the Lord) *give me* leave (*having this* opportunity) *to* acquaint *you with my ſerious* thoughts *and earneſt* deſires, *and I* truſt *through* Gods grace *that the* tranſcript *of them before your* eyes, *will helpe to make a deeper* impreſſion *of them upon your* hearts.

And firſt, I thanke my God through Jeſus Chriſt *for your* ſtedfaſtneſſe *in the* faith, *and your* mutuall amity, *whereby you become* exemplary *to many* pariſhes *in this* wavering *and* contentious *age. Oh that not* onely you,

but all *the* people *of this* Land *were* alike minded, one
Rom. 15.5. towards another according to Christ Jesus.

Next, let me in the bowels *of our* common Saviour
2 Tim. 4.1. beseech you, *and if this will not* prevaile, charge *you* before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall Judge the quicke and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdome; *that as you* drinke *in the heavenly* raine *which* commeth oft upon you, *so you endeavour to* bring forth
Heb. 6.7. herbes meet *for the great* husbandman *who* dresseth *you*.
I beare *you* record (*and that without* flattery) *you are* at-
Jam. 1.22. tentive hearers, *oh that you may be all* forward doers of the word.

There are some *amongst* you *whose* love *towards me*
1 Joh. 3.18. *hath been*, not onely in tongue and in word but in deed, *and that in a* more *than* ordinary measure. *But yet, let me* freely *tell you. There is nothing* (if I know my owne heart) *would so* rejoyce *me as to* see *the* fruit *of my weake* labours, *in the* holinesse *of your* lives. *Beleeve it, this is the* greatest Kindnesse *a* people *can* show *to their* Minister, *since whereas by a* liberall contribution *they* adde *to his comfortable* subsistence *upon* earth, *by a* religious conversation, *they* increase *his eternall* reward *in* heaven.

Act. 20.32. And now Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are
Rom. 15.30. sanctified, *humbly intreating you to* strive together with me in your prayers to God *both for* me *and your* selves, *that* I *may* so preach *and* live, *you may* so heare *and* doe, *as that we may* behold each other, *and* all *of* us our Redeemer *with* joy *in the* last day. *So prayeth*

Your faithfull servant for
Christs sake in the Gospel,
NATH: HARDY.

Phil. 2. 27. the former part.

For indeed he was ſick, nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him.

IF you pleaſe to peruſe the *five* laſt *Pſalms* of *David*, you ſhall finde them *beginning* and *ending* with an *Hallelujah*: *Praiſe ye the Lord*, being the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *Prora* and the *Puppis*, the *firſt* and the *laſt* words of each. Not much unlike is Saint *Pauls* practiſe in the *Epiſtle* to the *Romans*, who almoſt in the very entrance placeth an εὐχαριστῶ, *I thanke my God through* Ieſus *Chriſt*, and cloſeth with a θεῶ μόνῳ, *To God onely wiſe be glorie through* Ieſus *Chriſt*. In imitation of theſe patternes I ſhall place *Thankſgiving*, both in the *Front* and *Reere* of my Diſcourſe. Indeed what fitter *Proœmium* to a *gratulatorie* Sermon than a *Benedictus*? *Bleſſed* therefore *be God*, who kept his *unworthie* Servant from *falling* into the *Grave*, a *Land* of *Silence* and *Forgetfulneſſe*, and hath now vouchſafed him the *libertie* of entring into his *Houſe*, the *place* of *Prayers* and *Prayſes*. *Bleſſed be God*, who hath brought my *feet* from *lying* in a *ſick* bed to ſtand in this holy *Mount*. Finally *bleſſed be God*, who hath given me a joyfull *occaſion* of *handling*, and juſt *cauſe* of *applying* this *Scripture* to *my ſelfe*, by changing the *third* Perſon unto the *firſt*; *For indeed I was ſick nigh to death, but God had mercy on me.* Rom. 1. 8. 16, 17.

This *Text* naturally *ſpreadeth* forth it ſelfe into *two* maine

boughes,

boughs, each of which have *three branches* sprouting from them.

Here is obſervable a *Diſtreſſe*, and a *Deliverance*; a *Danger*, and an *Eſcape*, an *Affliction*, and a *Liberation*: the *former* in thoſe words, *He was ſick nigh to death*; the *latter* in theſe, *but God had mercy on him.*

In the *Diſtreſſe* we have obſervable, the

1. *Quality* of the *Danger* what it was, in the word *Sick*.

2. *Extremity* of the *Meaſure*, how great it was, in thoſe words *nigh unto death.*

3. *Eminency* of the *Perſon*, whom it befell, in the relative *hee.*

In the *Deliverance* we have conſiderable, the

1. *Efficiency* of the *Author*, by whom it was conferred, in the Word *God.*

2. The *excellency* of the *Benefit*, how expreſſed, in thoſe words *had mercy on him.*

3. The *opportunity* of the *Time*, when vouchſafed, in the exceptive *but.*

Theſe are the ſeverall *Branches* of this Sacred *Tree*, into which I have *climbed* by the *Ladder* of *humane* induſtry, from which by the *hand* of *Divine* aſſiſtance I have *gathered*, and by the ſame hand ſhall now *ſcatter* among you ſuch *Fruit* as hath refreſhed my *owne*, and (I hope through Gods bleſſing) will nouriſh *your* ſoules; and ſo I begin with the

Gen. 1. *Diſtreſſe*, *He was ſick nigh to death*; and therein the quality of the *danger* in that word *ſick.*

The *Philoſopher*, obſerving the *property* of mans *conſtitution*, deſcribeth him by *riſibile*, to be a reaſonable living Creature, that hath the onely power of *laughing*; but the *Divine* conſidering the *miſery* of mans *condition* no leſſe, aptly characterizeth him by *flebile*, an unfortunate wretch, that hath the moſt cauſe of *weeping*: In this reſpect it is not unfitly taken notice of, how the new-born *Babe* commeth into the world *crying*, as if by the *language* of its preſent *tears*, it would *foretell* the ſadneſſe of its future *ſorrowes.*

Vagiluq; locum lugubri complet ut æquum'ſt, cui tantum in vitâ reſtat tranſire malorum. Luer.

Among thoſe many *evills* with which the *life* of man is beſet, this of *ſickneſſe* is *one.*

Aug. in Pſ. 111 One to which *all* are ſubject, *quis non ægrotat in hac vitâ? quis*

quis languorem non experitur ? nasci in hoc corpore mortali incipere agrotare est : Who in this life doth not more or lesse taste of *sickneſſe ?* yea from the *Cradle* to the *Crutch*, *Birth* to *Death*, *Wombe* to the *Tombe*, we are *continually* liable to it.

One of which we may say, as *Leah* of *Gad*, *A Troop cometh*, and to which that *Devils* name in the *Goſpel* may fitly be applyed *Legion :* The *Poet* instancing in *one* kind of *diſeaſe*, speaketh of a *band* of *Feavers*, Gen. 30. 11. Mark 5. 9.

Nova febrium,
Terris incubuit cohors : Horat. od. 3.

And *Galen* reckoning up the diſeases to which *one* part of mans *body*, the *eye* is subject, numbreth 112. how great an *Army* then must this *Commander* have, who begirteth this *Caſtle* of the *Body* in *every* part and corner, and that with ſeverall *Souldiers* ! No wonder if the holy tongue, as it calleth men מתים which ſignifieth *dying men*, becauſe they are continually under the power of *death*, ſo it ſtyles them אנשים *ſickly men*, becauſe they are expoſed to ſuch variety of *ſickneſſes*.

φυγαδευτέον ἀπὸ μὲν σωμα τὸ νόσον ἀπὸ δὲ ψυχῆς ἁμαρτίαν, κοιλείας δὲ πολυτελείαν πόλεως δὲ στάσιν, οἴκου δὲ διχοφορσύνην. *Pythag. Apo. in Iambl.*

Finally *one* which *exceedeth* all thoſe other *miſeries* of this preſent *life*, what *diſſention* is in a *City*, *diſcord* in a *Family*, *ſurfetting* to the *Stomach*, *ignorance* to the *Minde*, that is *ſickneſſe* to the *Body*, diſturbing and oppreſſing it ; yea, it is the *worſt* evill of *cold*, *hunger*, and *nakedneſſe*, of *heat*, *thirſt*, and *warmnes*, that they *haſten* upon us *ſickneſſe* and *death*.

κακῶν τὸ ἀπευκτότατον καὶ βαρύτατον κακὸν ἡ νόσος καὶ εἰς κατάφαν τοῖς πολλοῖς περιχειρότατον. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16.

That I may the better *open* this *diſtreſſe*, give me leave to *delineate* it both in the *effects* that flow from it, and the *cauſe* from which it floweth.

There are *two* grievous *attendants* which *ſickneſſe* commonly bringeth along with her, namely *paine* and *weakneſſe* ; by *paine* it taketh away the *comfort* of all enjoyments, even of life it ſelfe ; *Barzillai* being *old*, ſaid to the *King*, *Can thy Servant taſte what I eat, or what I drink ? Can I heare any more the voice of ſinging men, and ſinging women ? wherefore ſhould thy ſervant be a burden to my Lord the King ?* Not much unlike may it be ſaid of the *ſick* man, *Can he eat, or can he drinke ? Can muſick, or any other pleaſures then delight him,* 2 Sam 19. 35.

Tria haec in omni morbo gravia ſunt, metus mortis, dolor corporis, intermiſſio voluptatis. Sen. Ep. 77.

when he is a burthen to himſelfe? And as by reaſon of *paine*, it renderth life *uncomfortable*, ſo by reaſon of *weakneſſe*, *unſerviceable*, diſenabling the body from the performance of any work: Alas, how can the *Clock* go when the *Weights* are plucked off? or the *Watch* move right, when the *Wheels* are out of order?

Both theſe ſad *effects* are fitly expreſſed by two *words*, the *one* in the *Hebrew*, the *other* in the *Greek* tongue, and it is the *word* which our *Apoſtle* here uſeth. The *Hebrew* word-- אנש ſignifieth both *doluit* and *ægrotavit*, to be *ſick*, and to be *ſorry*: well are they expreſſed by one word, ſince they commonly go together, both ſmarting *paine* in the *Body*, and dolorous *anguiſh* in the *Mind* being cauſed by *ſickneſſe*; in this reſpect the *Engliſh* word *diſeaſe*, is very *appoſite*, becauſe it diſeaſeth and diſturbeth the perſon; of this
Pſal. 6. 2, 3. *David* complained in his *ſickneſſe*, when he ſaith, *My bones are vexed, and my ſoule is alſo ſore vexed.* The *Greek* word ἀσθένω implyeth both *ægrotari*, and *imbecillem eſſe*, to be *ſick*, and to be *weak*, and therefore the *Noun* of this *Verbe* is elſewhere
Mat. 9 17. Pſal. 38. 8. rendred *infirmity*: this inconvenience likewiſe *David* found by his *diſeaſe*, when he ſaid, *I am feeble; and ſore broken*; *weaknes* being the inſeparable concomitant of *ſicknes*.

Quando hæc vam grandia faciet vicino jam exitu, etiam à medicorum actione excluſus faciſcente jam corpore ubi exercebit diſtrictionis officium cenſor animus Salv. *ad Eccl. Catbol. l. 1.* Iam. 5.

Meditations, wch (*I would to God*) were more deeply *imprinted* on the mindes of men, *thoſe eſpecially*, who put off their *repentance*, and the *working out* of their *ſalvation* till a *ſick* bed, as if when they are in *pain*, they could *repent* with the more *eaſe*, or when they are *weakeſt*, they were *ſtrong* enough for this *work*: Alas, doe you not know how *unfit* ſuch a time is for *any*, but much more a *religious* employment? This no doubt is *one* reaſon why Saint *James*, who in other *afflictions* adviſeth men to *pray* for themſelves, in *ſickneſſe* counſelleth them to *call for the Elders of the Church to pray* over them, becauſe then for the moſt part they are *unable* to pray themſelves: in this reſpect it was (as I have read) the *ſaying* of a vertuous *Gentlewoman* upon her *ſick* bed, *Let none defer their preparation nor*
Langborn's ſun. Serm. of M. s. Mary Swaine. *their prayers unto the bed of their ſickneſſe, for then the minde is too much troubled with grief of body to be employed, as they ought, in ſpiritual exerciſe. Tell me*, whoever thou art that delayeſt till *this* time, how knoweſt thou, but ſuch a *ſickneſs* may ſeize upon thee

thee as in a moment, may *take* away thy *life*? or if not, *bereave* thee of thy *ſenſes*? or it may be ſo *painfull*, that it is *all* thou *canſt* do to *wreſtle* with the *paine*; nay, let me tell thee, for the moſt part ſuch *procraſtinators*, when that time commeth, either repent *not at all* in their *ſickneſſe*, or it proveth but a *ſickly* repentance. Oh then (*my Brethren!*) be *wiſe* in *time*, doe not lay the *greateſt* load on the *feebleſt* horſe, put not the *weakeſt* ſervant to the *hardeſt* labour, put not off the *maine buſineſſe* of thy *ſoules health* to the dolefull time of thy *bodies ſickneſſe*.

Quia deus non irridetur, ipſe ſe decepit qui mortem multis temporibus vixit & ad quarendam vitam ſemivivus aſſurgit & tunc officium appetet quando dominica ſervituti omnia corporis & anima ſubtrahuntur officia. Fauſt. Epiſt. prma.

You have heard what *ſickneſſe doth*, or rather *undoeth*; it would not be amiſſe to enquire *whence* it came, and how it was brought into the world. Indeed (as *Chriſt* ſaith in another caſe) *it was not ſo from the beginning*. *Man* in *innocency* was created with a *body* of ſo *equall* and laſting a *temperature*, that (had he not *ſinned*) it had neither been *taken downe* by *death*, nor *put* out of *frame* by *ſickneſſe*. *Sinne* it is which is *fons Mali, morbi, mortis*, hath brought in *evill* inſtead of *good*, *death* of *life*, and *ſickneſſe* of *health*. The *Phyſitian* being asked the *cauſe* of *Diſeaſes*, anſwereth, and moſt truly, *mali humores*, *evill humors in the body*. But the *Divine* reſolveth it more *fully*, *mali mores*, *ill manners in the life*. *Phyloſophy* teacheth, and *Experience* confirmeth it, that *paſſiones animæ ſequuntur temperamentum corporis*, the *mindes paſſions* much *follow* the *bodyes temper*. *Divinity* preacheth no leſſe *truly*, that the *diſorder* of the *body followeth* upon the *diſtemper* of the *minde*; Mans *ſoule* was firſt *ſick of ſinne*, and ſo the *body* becommeth infected with *ſickneſſe for ſinne*. It was the *firſt* ſinne of *Adam* which *brought forth*, and it is our owne actuall ſinnes that *nouriſh* this degenerate *Brat*, wherewith *mankinde* is ſo miſerably *infeſted*.

Mat. 19. 8. *Cum omnes homines velint pœnitentiam in fine vitæ ſuæ accipere, vix paucos videmus eam ſecundum quod deſiderant adipiſci.* Elig. de can. dom; hom. ſens.

A *Meditation*, which (if well pondered) would learne us to beare *ſickneſſe* whenſoever it commeth upon us *without murmuring*, and yet *with mourning*.

1. Why ſhouldſt thou *repine* at *God* when any *diſeaſe* ſeizeth one thee? True, he is the *efficient*, but thou art the *meritorious* cauſe; he *inflicteth*, but it is *ſinne* that *deſerveth*; he *puniſheth*, but it is not till thou haſt *provoked* him, *blame* not his

Nihil eſt quod de calamitatibus noſtris Deo imputare poſſumus, nos calamitatum

noſtrarum auctores ſumus. Salv. de Gub. l. 8

à Deo punimur ſed ipſi facimus ut puniamur. id ibid.

Jerem. 4. 18.

juſtice, but thank thy owne *wickedneſſe*, the *Moth* that *frets* the *garment* is *bred* of it; the *Tree* giveth *life* to that *Worme* which *killeth* it. *Thy ſickneſſe*, oh man, is *of thy ſelfe, and thy owne wayes and doings are they which procure theſe things to thee.*

Gr. Naz Epiſt 70.

2. When *ſickneſſe ſmiteth* thy *body*, let *repentance ſmite* thy *thigh*; when the *diſeaſe rageth* in thy *members*, let thy *ſoule* be *angry* at thy *ſinne*, and as thou *complaineſt* of the *effect*, ſo labor to be *ſenſible* of the *cauſe*: νόσος παιδαγωγία πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον ſaith the *Divine* excellently, *ſickneſs* is an wholſome *Diſcipline*, it is ſo when it *teacheth* us to *know* our *folly*. *Happy* diſeaſe which *openeth* our *eyes* at once to *ſee*, and *weep* for our *ſinnes*; *Oh my ſoule, it is ſinne hath cauſed thy body to feele ſickneſſe, let ſickneſſe cauſe thee to feele the weight of ſinne; it is wickedneſſe hath brought this weakneſſe, let this weakneſſe bring thee to a ſight and ſenſe of thy wickedneſſe, why ſhouldſt thou hold that ſword in thy hand, which hath ſo ſorely wounded it? or hug that ſerpent in thy boſome, which hath ſo painfully ſtung thee? rather ſince the fruit is ſo bitter, pluck up the root, and let not ſin reigne any longer in thy mortal body, ſeeing it hath made thy body ſo mortall.* And ſo much for the *quality* of the *danger*: I paſs on to the *Extremity* of the *meaſure*, *nigh unto death.*

Mortem omni ætati communem eſſe ſentio. Cic. de Senect. *tunc trepidamus cum propè a vobis credimus eſſe mortem, à quo propè non eſt parata omnibus locis omnibuſque momentis.* Sen. Epiſt 30. *Tres ſunt nuntii mortis, caſus infirmitas, ſenectus, caſus nuntiat mortem latentem, infirmitas apparentem, ſenectus præſentem.* Hugo de S. vict. de claus. An.

It is that, which in ſome ſenſe is true of *every* man alive, this *world* is a *region* of *Ghoſts*, dying men, yea, *young* men in the prime of their dayes, *ſtrong* men in the full vigour of their age, are *nigh to death*, becauſe *death* may then be neer to them. The *Philoſopher* being ask'd what he thought of *life*, *turn'd* him *round* and *vaniſhed* out of *ſight*, thereby intimating, how eaſily and ſpeedily life may be taken away: and ſome of them have no leſſe truly than aptly repreſented the *diſtance* between *life* and *death* by *oculus*, *apertus* and *clauſus*, an *eye* open and ſhut, which is done in a *moment*. But though this in ſome reſpect be verified of all men, yet it is more eſpecially true of two ſorts of perſons, to wit, *old* men, and *ſick* men, ſince *old age* is νόσος φυσικὴ a *naturall diſeaſe*, and a *diſeaſe* is γῆρας ἐπίκτητον an *accidentall old age*, *both* muſt needs tend and *haſten* to *death.*

As for *old* men, they are ſo *nigh to death*, that the *Proverbe* ſaith, *they have one foot in the grave, young* men may dye *ſoon*, but *they cannot* live *long*; the *dimneſſe* of light in their *eyes*, and *vapours* that ſometimes are drawne up into their *braines*, argue the *Sun* of their *life* to be *ſetting*, the hoary *froſt*, or rather white *ſnow* upon their *heads*, proclaimes that the *winter* of their *deaths* is approaching. The more *ſtrange* it is to ſee them *doting* on, who are *going out* of the *world*, and as if they could ſet up *under ground*, their *mindes* are moſt *earthly* whileſt their *bodies* are ready to *drop* into the *earth*: the more *ſad* it is to think how both *unwilling* and *unfit* they are to *die*, who yet are ſo *unlikely* to *live*; and as if with the *Eagle* they could *renew their youth*, they *flatter* themſelves in *hope* of *life*, when yet they are as it were within *ſight* of *death*; how ſhort are ſuch *men* of that *heathen Seneca*, who ſaid of *himſelfe*, *ante ſenectutem curavi bene vivere, in ſenectute bene mori*, my care in *youth* was to *live*, but in *old* age to *die well*, then no doubt perceiving his *death* to be *at hand*.

Nihil habet quod speret quem senectus ducit ad mortem Sen. Ep. 30

Quemadmodum senectus adoleſcentiam ſequitur, ita mors ſenectutem. Ibid

pedetentim morior dixit Alexis senex luxe incedens.

Chiron me momordit dixit Demonax senex pro cane, immunes ſenectutem morti vicinam. Eraſm. Apoth. l. 6. & 8.

As *old* men, be they never ſo *well*, ſo *ſick* men, by they never ſo *young*, are *nigh to death*; what *Anacharſis* ſaid of *Seamen*, that he knew not whether to reckon them among the *living* or the *dead*, is no leſſe true of *ſick* men, who indeed are *not dead*, becauſe they *breath*, and yet *not living* becauſe not *luſty*; *every* man carrieth *death* in his *boſome*, but the *ſick* man at his *backe*, or rather in his *armes* before his *face*.

τῆς ζῆν γὰρ ὀδεὶς οὐς ὁ γέρων ἐφάσκων ἐοῦ. Crat. Antiph.

Juvenibus incertus hujus vitæ terminus instat, ſenibus vero certus maturior ex hac luce exitus breviter concordat Cypr. de 12. abuſ. Sæc.

In ſumme there is a three-fold *propinquity* of *death*, *poſſible*, *probable*, *certaine*; it is *poſſible the healthieſt*, *ſtrongeſt*, and *youngeſt* may *dye quickly*; it is *certaine old* men (though they out-live far younger) cannot *live long*; and it is *probable* that the *ſick* mans *death* is *at hand*.

But yet *this* in the *proper* ſenſe is *not true* of *all ſickneſſes*, that *diſtinction* of *ſinne* cannot hold in *Divinity*, according to the *Popiſh* acception, that ſome are *veniall*, others *mortall*, ſince S. *Paul* ſaith indefinitely, and meaneth it uniuerſally, that *death* is the *wages* of *ſin*, but *Analogically* it is true in *Phyſick* of *diſeaſes*; ſome are onely *painfull*, others *mortall*, the *Gout* in the *Toe*, a *pain* in the *Teeth*, a *prick* in the *Finger*; theſe, though they cauſe *pain*, yet are *not* in their owne nature *deadly*, Diog laert. l. 1.

ἐφωλωθεὶς πόρρω τέρει πλείης εἰσὶν οἱ ζώντες ἢ οἱ τέκεσι ἔρη τὰς ὄν πλησίοις τῆ τιδης.

ly; nor is the *patient* accounted the *neerer* death for them.

Beſides, of *mortall diſeaſes* there is a *difference*, ſome are a *long* time *untwiſting*, others in a *ſhort* time *cut* aſunder the *thread* of *life*: thus the *Dropſie* is a *great* while in *drowning*, the *Palſie* in *ſhaking* downe, and the *Conſumption* in *drying* up the *body*, whileſt the *Feaver* in a *few dayes burneth*, and an *Apoplexie*, or *Apoſteme* in a *few houres ſuffocate* it.

And yet once more in *violent diſeaſes*, there is a *difference*, we do not ſay of *every* man whom a *Feaver* ſmiteth, that he is preſently *nigh to death*; whileſt the *body* is *vigorous*, the *Phyſick proſperous*, we account the *patient hopefull*; but thoſe, in whom the *virulency* of the *diſeaſe* ſo *farre* prevaileth, as that both the *ſtrength* of *Nature*, & *skill* of *Art* ſeem *unable* to *grapple* with it, are only and juſtly looked upon as *nigh to death*.

ἐκεινὸς ὅτε ἰατρῶν τέχναι ἔτε θερα-πεῖα πᾶσα περσαγομένη. Cr. Naz. Orat. 19.

Such, no doubt, was *Epaphroditus* his caſe, for though ſome conceive this danger might ariſe from *ſtripes* and ſcourges, which *Nero* ſhould *command* to be *inflicted* on *him* at *Rome*, yet it is more rationally and generally concluded, that ſome *violent ſickneſſe*, by reaſon of a *long Journy*, had ſeized upon him; and though it is *likely* this *good man* was not *negligent* (according as *ability* and *opportunity* was afforded) to *uſe meanes*, yet the *diſeaſe* did ſo *increaſe*, that as to life his *condition* was *deſperate*, and therefore S. *Paul* ſaith of him *he was nigh unto death*.

Forſitan quia verberatus eſt ab infidelibus in miniſterio. Anſelm. in loc. Chryſoſt. in v. 29.

To this *low* and weake eſtate is *God* pleaſed many times to *bring* men among *others*, chiefly for a *double end*, and that he may *minde* them of their *diſſolution*, and *quicken* them in their *devotion*.

Humana frugalitatis nimia in proſperis rebus oblivio eſt. Qu. Curt. l. 4.

Of *all things* we are very prone to *forget* our *latter end*, and therefore *God* by ſickneſſe puts us *in minde* of it, we are apt to put *death farre* from us, and therefore by ſome grievous diſeaſe *God* bringeth us *nigh to death*; *a preſumption*, we ſhall not dye *yet*, maketh us not think of dying *at all*, and whileſt *marrow* is in our *bones*, *colour* in our *faces*, *appetite* in our *ſtomachs*, *ſtrength* in our *joynts*, *health* in our *bodyes*, we *eaſily* perſwade our ſelveswe ſhall not dye *yet*; no mervaile, if to *fixe* our *eyes* upon the *Grave*, *God chaſten us with paine upon our Bed*, ſo

ἵνα ἡμῖν ᾖ ὅτι τῆς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ὑπομνήματα. Greg. Naz.

that

that our life abhorreth bread, our fleſh conſumeth away, and our ſoule draweth neare to the grave. It was the *confeſſion* of *Alexander*, when *let bloud* with an *arrow*: *All men call me* Jupiters *Sonne, but this wound proclaimes me a mortall man*: and yet more *divine* was that of *Antigonus*, who acknowledged his *diſeaſe* to be ſent as a *Monitor*, leſt otherwiſe he might have growne *inſolent* through the *forgetfulneſſe* of *mortality*. *Sickneſſes* eſpecially, when *deſperate*, are *warning peices* to tell us the *murdering peice* of death is ready to *deſtroy*, every *ach tolls* the *Bell*, but *theſe*, as it were, *dig* the *grave*, and cry *duſt to duſt*; and good reaſon it is, that when we *caſt* the *thought* of *death* behinde our *backs*, *death* it ſelfe ſhould by *theſe diſeaſes looke* us in the *face*, and as it were, *pluck* us by the *throat*.

Iob 33.18.19. 20. Omnes (inquit Alexander ſagittâ ictus) jurant me Jovis eſſe filium, ſed hoc vultus hominem eſſe me clamat. Sen. Ep. 59. Ἀντίγονος νοσήσας ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐμῆς χειρὸς ἐμνήσθη γὰρ ἡμᾶς ὅτι θνητοὺς ὄντας θυητὸς ὢν μὲν μέγα φρονεῖν οὐκ ἔφη. Plut. Apoth.

2. In *health* we are no leſſe apt to *forget God* than our *ſelves*, but *ſickneſſe mindeth* us of *him*, in *proſperity* perhaps we *mumble* over a *Pater Noſter*, but *adverſity* teacheth us to *cry Abba Father*: *Lord*, ſaith the *Prophet*, *in trouble have they viſited thee*, they who before were *ſtrangers*, now would bee *familiar* with *God*, and give him a *viſit*; *they poured out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them*, it may be before they did *ſay* a *prayer*, but now they *poure out* a *prayer*. Iſa. 26. 16.

Though *man* by the *formation* of his *body* be made with an *erect* countenance, yet he ſeldome *looks up* to *heaven* till ſome *diſeaſe* hath laid him upon his *back*; nor yet many times will a *ſlight* ſickneſſe prevaile: *God* promiſeth himſelfe concerning his *people*, *in their affliction they will ſeeke me early*, but for the *moſt* part it proveth *otherwiſe*; *ubi deſinit medicus, ibi incipit Theologus*, the *Divine*'s work *begins* not with many till the *Phyſitian*'s is *done*, it is *late* enough not to ſeeke *God* till *affliction* comes, and yet we *ſeeke God* not *early*, but *late* in *affliction*. The *Woman* in the *Goſpell* ſick of a *bloudy Iſſue*, goeth not to *Chriſt* till ſhe had *ſpent all* (and that to no purpoſe) *upon Phyſitians*, the *Prodigall* thinketh not of *going home* to his *Father*, till he is brought ſo low, that he would in *Pſal.* 119. faine be *fed* with *huſks*, but *cannot get* them: nor doe many *lift* up their *eyes* or *hands* to *heaven*, till they are ſcarce able to *lift* up *either*. Indeed *neceſſity* is an excellent *Miſtris*, eſpeci-

Hoſ. 5. ult. Luk. 8. 43. Luk. 15. 16. εἰδὲς τῆς θλίψεως τὸ κέρδος ὅτι πρὸς θεὸν ἐυχὴν αὐτὸς ἤγαγε καθαπερ ἐαν. Chryſ. *Pſal.* 119. χρεία διδάσκει κἀν ἄμουσος. Suid.

ally of *Devotion*: Moſt men *will* not *pray* till they *muſt*, it is *miſery*, which like *Jonahs fiſh*, puts them upon humble *ſupplication*, who never *thought* of *God* under the *gourd* of *Proſperity*. In which reſpect, that *Latine Proverb* was not taken up without juſt cauſe, *Qui neſcit orare, diſcat navigare*; he that knoweth not how to *pray*, let him turne *Mariner*: and no doubt thoſe violent *ſtormes*, which make the *Seas* to *roare*, will teach *him* to *pray*. When thoſe young *Perſian* gallants being beaten and purſued by their *enemies*, came to the River *Strymon*, which was ſo *frozen* that their *Boats* could not *launch*, and yet it began to *thaw*, ſo that they feared the *Ice* would not beare them, then (though the day before they *reviled* both *God* and his *providence*) moſt *timorouſly* they fall upon their *faces*, and *ardently beg* of *God* that the *River* might *beare* them over from their enemyes purſuit. The ſmart *laſhes* of Gods *rod* drive them home, and draw them *neare* to *him*, who before were *farre* from *him*.

Dr. *Jer. Tay.* Sermon.

τί ἐστὶν ἐκ βαθέων κἂν ἁπλῶς φήσιν ἀπὸ σώματος, οὐδὲ ἀπὸ τῆς γλώττης, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ καρδίας, ἰδιάζυται γὰρ αἱ πῶν θλιβομένων ψυχαὶ πρὸς εὐχαί. *Chryſo. in Pſal.* 129. κάμνουσα ψυχὴ ἔνεχυς ὄζει θεοῦ. *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 17.

The *Greekes* aptly expreſſe the *declining* eſtate of a *Kingdome* by πεσεῖν εἰς γόνυ *falling* upon the *Knee*, and its *ruined* eſtate by πεσεῖν εἰς στόμα falling upon the *Mouth*; expreſſions, which though they principally referre to the *condition*, yet withall intimate the *diſpoſition* of men in an *afflicted* condition, they whoſe *knees* in health were like *Elephants*, without *joynts*, could not, or rather would not bend, in *ſickneſſe* fall upon their *knees*, nay, when *nigh to death*, fall upon their *mouthes* in humble *adoration* and earneſt *invocation* upon *God*. And for theſe cauſes, that men may both looke *forward* to their *end*, and *upward* to their *God*; he is pleaſed to bring them *downeward*, almoſt to the *Gates of Death*, and *Chambers* of the *Grave*.

To end this, let us all make *account* of, and *prepare* for *ſtraights*. In *health*, expect *ſickneſſe*, in *ſickneſſe* looke for *death*, or to be brought *nigh to it*. *Diſeaſes* may come *unſent* for, let them not come *unlook'd* for; if they happen not, thou art not the *worſe*, and it is *labour well loſt*; if they *doe*, thou art the *better* fitted, and it is *time well ſpent*. Doe not *flatter* thy ſelfe in *health*, as if the *mountaine* of thy body were *ſo ſtrong that it could not be moved*: Alas, one *blaſt* from *heaven* can-

not

not onely *move*, but *remove*, *ſhake*, but *overturne* it; rather even then when thou art *fed* with fat *paſtures*, cleare *waters*, thy *Table* ſpread, thy *Cup* full, thy *Body* hayle, often thinke of *walking through the valley of the ſhadow of death*: *Happy* is that man, whom when *ſickneſſe* arreſteth, and *death* approacheth to, can ſay, and ſay it truly, *This is no more then what I have looked and provided for all my dayes.* And ſo much be ſpoken of the ſecond particular, paſs we now to the third. Pſal. 23. 4.

3. *Eminency* of the *perſon*, whom this extreame *diſeaſe* befell in the relative *He*. If you would know *who* this *He* was, be pleaſed to caſt your eyes on the 25. *verſe* of the *Chapter*, where you finde his *name* to be *Epaphroditus*, one that was not onely a *good* Man, but a *Man* of *God*, not onely a *Servant*, but a *Miniſter* of *Chriſt*, and one ſo *eminent*, as that Saint *Paul* dignifies him with the *titles* of his *Brother*, and *Companion*, and *fellow-Souldier*; and yet of him it is here ſaid that *he was nigh unto death.* Ver. 25. Ibid.

Saints as well as *ſinners*, *Miniſters* as well as the *People*, are *liable* to deſperate *diſeaſes*. In reſpect of *temporall* evills they have no more *priviledge* than *others*: And no wonder, ſince

1. That which is the *cauſe* both of *ſickneſſe* and *death*, remaineth in them, to wit, *ſinne*: Indeed the *power* of *ſinne* is weakened, therefore they cannot be *hurt of the ſecond death*, but the *being* of it remaineth, and that neceſſitateth the *firſt*: they are ſo freed from the *guilt* of it, that they ſhall not *taſte* the *torments* of *hell*, but yet they may *drinke deepe* of the *miſeries* of this *life*: *ſinne* will not leave the *beſt* man till it hath *brought* him to his *grave*, well may it bring him to his *ſick* bed. *Peccatum ſeptrans inter nos & Deum penitus auferri non poteſt, donec liberemur a corpore.* Bern. de 3. in adv. Serm. 6.

2. In reſpect of their *bodily conſtitution*, they are *earthly houſes*, that will *moulder* away, till at laſt they *fall*: *earthen veſſels* ſubject to *flawes* and *cracks*, till at length they *breake*. The *Saints* are the *Sonnes of God* by *grace*, but ſtill the *Sonnes of Adam* by *nature*, the *Miniſters* are *Angels* in reſpect of their *office*, but ſtill they are *Men* in regard of their *perſons*, and being of the ſame *mould*, and ſubject to the ſame *dangers* with *others*.

3. More ſpecially, the very *calling* and *employment* of *Miniſters* is ſuch, as *exhauſteth* their *ſpirits*, *weakeneth* their *bodyes*, and *accelerateth* both *diſeaſes* and *death*: our *Apoſtle* ſaith of *Epaphrodit*. that for the *work of Chriſt he was nigh to death*; v. 30. the *worke* he there meaneth is moſt *probably* conceived to be the *travelling* of this good man to *Rome*, with ſupplyes for *his* wants, (to *relieve* a *Chriſtian*, eſpecially a *Meſſenger* of *Chriſt*, is the *work of Chriſt*) but it is no leſſe true of the *worke of Chriſt*, which is *peculiarly* the *Miniſters*, ſince the *pains* they take in *preaching*, oft times Chriſt brings them *nigh to death*. It was ſaid of *Archimedes*, *ſtudiis quibus obtinuit famam amiſit vitam*, *the ſtudies which got him credit loſt his life*; and it may be ſaid of many *Miniſters*, the *faſtings*, *watchings*, *labours preachings*, by which they *profit* the peoples *ſoules*, *hurt* their *bodyes*. Thus like the *candle* they *waſte* themſelves that they might *enlighthen*, yea, like the *ſalt* they *diſſolve* themſelves that they may *ſeaſon* others.

4. Finally, *God* hath choice and ſingular *ends* at which he aimeth, when he bringeth his owne Servants or Miniſters into ſuch *deſperate ſickneſſes*, and that both, in regard of *ſinne* and *grace*.

1. In regard of their *ſinnes*, that they may be either *purged* or *prevented*, by which means their *ſickneſſe* becomes their *Phyſicke*, and the *Malady* it ſelfe a ſpirituall *remedy*. It may be they have *fallen* into ſome *groſſe ſinne*, and therefore they *fall* into ſome *grievous ſickneſſe*: So was it with thoſe *unworthy* Communicants, concerning whom Saint *Paul* ſaith, *for which cauſe many of them were weake*, *many ſick*, *and ſome ſlept*. It may be God ſeeth them *prone* to *commit* ſome *hainous fault* which he *reſtraineth* them from by ſome *dolorous ſickneſſe*, as S. *Paul* had a *prick in his fleſh* that he might not be *puffed up* in his *minde*: ſo *God* ſometimes *wounds* his Servants *bodyes*, as knowing, that otherwiſe they would have *wounded* their *conſciences*.

2. In reſpect of their *graces*, that the *truth* of them may be *tried*, the *acts* of them *renewed*, and the *ſtrength* of them *encreaſed*. *God* hath *many* wayes to *try* men, among which *ſickneſſe*, eſpecially if *dangerous*, is a ſore *tryall*, and therefore when

ἱ δ' ἀσχόμενος τὰς μαθητὰς αὐτὸν ἤχεται τοῦ χείσου, ἢ ὅ ἐστερητῶν ἔν τίνι ἶσις μαθηταῖς χεισῶ ὑπηρετεῖ. *Oecumen. ib.*

Cauſa morbi fuit nimia diligentia in me curando, in docendo evangelio, in defendendâ meâ cauſâ, in vigiliis, jejunio, lucubrationibus, &c. Arer. ibid.

τὶ θαύμασον εἰ κακοπαθοῦσι καὶ ἅγιοι, εἴτε εἰς καθάρσιν, εἴτε εἰς βασάνον ἀρετῆς ἢ πείραν φιλοσοφίας. *Greg. Naz. Orat.* 19.

1 Cor. 11. 30.

2 Cor. 12. 7.

ἔστε ἀγαθός τις ἔδι χωεὶς ἁμαρτίας, ἔστε κακός τις χωεὶς δικαιοσύνης, ἀμφοτέρεις δὲ ἀ-

when the *Devill*, by *Gods* leave had tryed *Job* in the losse of his *Cattell*, *Servants*, and *Children*, he obtaineth *licence* to inflict *sores* upon his *body*, making this his *last* (as accounting it his *fiercest*) onset. Indeed then is the *triall* of a mans *faith*, when *God* seemeth as if he would *slay* him, of his *hope* when all things are *desperate*, of his *love* when *God* frowneth upon, nay *beateth* him, of his *patience* when the *paine* is *sharp*, of his *courage* when the *sorrowes of death compasse him*, of his *perseverance*, when he *holds fast his integrity* to the *death*.

To *close up this*, let it be a lesson of *comfort*, of *charity*, and of *diligence*.

1. Of *comfort*, when any *sickneſse* seizeth on thee, remember *whose lot* it hath been as well as *thine*, and be not discouraged. When *Christ* would encourage his *Disciples* against *sufferings*, he useth this argument, *for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you*: Mat. 5.11. it is that *meditation* which may *revive* us when we are in pain and misery, *so it fared with others of Gods faithfull ones before me*. That *argument* of *Eliah* indeed was somewhat *passionate*, 1 King. 19.4. *It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my Fathers*; but it is a *pious* reasoning for every *Christian* to say, *I am content Lord, if thou take away my health, exercise me with diseases, I am not better than* Job, David, Hezekiah, Epaphroditus, *and others of thy faithfull Servants and Ministers; who am I, that I should think much to pledge those holy men of God, though in a bitter Cup?*

2. Of *Charity*, and that both to thy *selfe* and *others*.

1. *Condemne* not thy *selfe* as if *God hated* thee, because he *corrects* thee, or as if he were *more angry* with thee than *others*, because he *chastiseth* thee *more severely* then *them*. Indeed it is *good* in a *time* of *sickneſse* to *reflect* upon thy *selfe*, examine thy wayes, and if *conscience accuse* of some great misdemeanour, to *humble* thy selfe, and *acknowledge* thy *disease* the *just reward* of thy *offence*, but otherwise, do not *conclude* thy *owne* guilt or *Gods hatred* meerely from the *premisses* of *sickneſse*, though *virulent*.

2. *Censure* not *others* as if they were therefore the *worst* of sinners, because in their bodyes the *greatest* sufferers. This is

μὴ βιβῆ ἡ ἀνάτισις ἐαν ἤ τις δὲ καλὸς ἢ φαῦλος ἐργάτης τι καὶ νοσήσῃ μὴ θορυβηθῇς. Chryſ. T. 7. de Morb. & Med.

Quosdam pietas Dei peccare posse, in salutem flagellat eos infirmitate corporis, ne peccent: ut eis utilius sit frangi languoribus ad salutem, quam revancre in olumes ad damnationem Bern. de Inc. Dom. cap. 46.

Probationes diversæ sunt credentium, alius per ægritudinem, alius amissione charorum, alius per damnum pecuniæ probatur. Ambr. in Loc.

ὅταν ἀῤῥωστία παρεισπέσῃ ἀνθρώπῳ ἀνημέλητι τῷ σώματος τῷ Ἰωβ, καὶ τῆς ἁγίας ἐκείνης σαρκός. Chryſ. T. 7. de Morb. & Med.

(*indeed*) that *hard* meaſure which *Gods people* and *Miniſters* often *meet* with: When the *Barbarians* ſaw a *Viper* upon *Paul's hand*, they preſently condemned him as a *murtherer*; and *David* complaineth of his *enemies*, that when he was *ſick*, *they ſpake miſchieveus things againſt him*: nay *Job's friends* (though good men) were deceived with this *fallacy*, and accuſe *Job* of *hypocriſie* becauſe of his *calamity*. And *thus* it is ſtill, If a zealous *Chriſtian*, or faithfull *Miniſter* be *viſited* with a dolefull *ſickneſſe*, his *Religion* muſt be no better than *Diſſimulation*, and his *Doctrine Hereſie*: But ſurely it is either *Ignorance*, or *Malice*, or *both*, that filleth mens mouthes with ſuch cenſures.

Act 28.4. Pſal. 38.13. *Quàm præpoſterum judicium eorum qui ex variis malis quibus nonnulli magni viri & doctores eccleſiæ laborare nonnunquam ſolent, ſiniſtre de illorum doctrina & ſalute judicare.* Zanch in Loc. Eccleſ. 9. 2. Pſal. 91.10.

It is true, there never was *ſickneſſe without ſinne*, but the *ſickneſſe* is not alwayes *proportioned* to the *ſinne*: *theſe things come alike to all*, was the *wiſe mans* Obſervation, nor doth *any ſickneſſe* befall *any man* which may not befall the *beſt* man. I know ſome aſſert a *Saint* to be *Plague-free*, grounding it upon the *Promiſe* in the *Pſalme*, that *no plague ſhall come nigh his dwelling*: But you muſt know, this is onely a *temporall* Promiſe, and therefore (as indeed *all ſuch*) hath a *double* condition annexed unto it. The one *ex parte perſonæ*, on the *Saints* part, which is to *make the Lord, even the moſt high, his habitation*; if then *good* men, in *peſtilentiall* times, through a diſtruſtfull *feare*, make the *Creatures* their *refuge*, no mervaile if the *plague* infect *them* and their *dwellings*. The other *ex parte rei*, in regard of *the thing* it ſelfe, which is onely *aſſured* ſo far as it may make for *Gods glory* and his *Peoples benefit*. We read in the former part of the tenth verſe *there ſhall no evill befall him*, whereby is intimated that the *plague* ſhall not then *come nigh to*, when it is *evill* for a *good* man, but if at any time *God* ſee it *good*, either for the *manifeſtation* of his *owne glory* (to wit, of his *juſtice* in ſo feverely *puniſhing* his owne, of his *power* and *mercy* in *delivering* from ſo deadly a *diſeaſe*) or for the ſpirituall *advantage* of his *people* (in *humbling* them for ſome *ſcandalous ſinne* by ſo *ſmart a chaſtiſement*, in *exerciſing* the *ſtrength* of their *patience* by ſo *ſore* a *tryall*) *not* the *holieſt* perſon is in ſuch caſes *exempted* from the *plague*, nor is it *improbably* conceived that *Job's* botches, *Hezekiah's*

Ver. 9.

boyles

boyles, *Davids* ſores were not much *different* from, if not altogether the *ſame* with the *plague*, who yet *all* of them were *choice* and eminent Saints. Oh then, let us take heed how we lay the *load* of heavy *cenſure* upon the *backs* of *Gods Miniſters* and *Servants*.

3. Of *diligence*, that

1. *We* who are *Miniſters*, *improve* the time of our *health* in *feeding the flocks of Chriſt*, ſince when *ſickneſſe* cometh, we ſhall be *diſenabled* from our employments: nay perhaps we that have *taught others*, may then have need to *learne our ſelves*.

You who are the *People*, *get* all the *good* you can from us, whileſt we are in a *capacity* of *doing* good to you, ere long the *Candle* of our *lives* may burne *dimme* by reaſon of ſome *ſickneſſe*, yea, be *blowne* out by *death*, and then we can *no longer* give *light* unto you. Oh therefore *walke in the light* while you have it, be *willing* to *learne* while we are *able* to *teach*, account our labours *precious*, and let them be *profitable* to you, whileſt God maketh us *able* to beſtow them among you, which we ſhall not be, when that *befalls* us which did *Epaphroditus* in the Text, to be *ſick nigh unto death*: And ſo I have given a *diſpatch* to the *firſt generall*, namely the *diſtreſſe*: I now proceed to

2. The *deliverance*, and therein the Gen. part.

1. *Efficiency* of the *Author*, *God*. Indeed both *life* and *death*, *health* and *ſickneſs*, are in *Gods hand*: That of the *Poet*,

Una eademq; manus vulnus opemq; tulit, *Ovid.*

may in this reſpect be fitly made uſe of; the *ſame hand* of Divine Providence is that which *maketh* and *cloſeth* the *wound*: *He killeth, and maketh alive, he bringeth downe to the grave, and bringeth up*, ſo ſingeth *Hannah*. 1 Sam. 2. 6: *I forme light, and create darkneſſe, I make peace, and create evil, I the Lord doe all theſe things*, is *Gods* owne *ſaying* by the *Prophet*. Thy *head* cannot *ake* without his *leave*, nor leave *aking* without his *help*; but though *both* are from him, yet with ſome *difference*. Of *ſickneſs*, he is onely the *efficient*, *ſinne* is the *meritorious* cauſe. Of *health* he is ſo the *efficient*, as that his *mercy* is the *impulſive* cauſe, for which reaſon perhaps it is here ſaid, *God had mercy*; that Iſa. 45. 7.

which

which *moveth him* is his *pitty*, and that which *helpeth us* is his *power*.

Sunt aliqua media divinæ providentiæ, non propter defectum suæ virtutis, sed propter abundantiam suæ bonitatis, ut dignitatem causalitatis etiam creaturis communicet. Aquin. part 1. q. 10. art 3.

True it is, *God* is for the moſt part pleaſed to make *uſe* of *meanes* in effecting *health*, but this ariſeth from the *greatneſſe of his goodneſſe, not any defect in his Almightineſſe*, as *Aquinas* pithily.

That he *needeth not* meanes, appeareth in as much as he ſometimes worketh *without* any. Such were the *Cures Chriſt* wrought upon *Peters Wives Mother*, the *Centurions Servant*, and the *Impotent Cripple*, whom his *Word* onely reſtored to health. Nay many times the meanes he uſeth are *improbable*, yea, of their owne nature apt to produce a *contrary* effect. What vertue could there be in the *waters of Jordan* to cleanſe *Naamans leproſie?* or in the *lump of figgs* to heale *Hezekiah's ſores?* yea, the *Spittle* and *Clay* which *Chriſt* made uſe of, were more *likely to* put *out* a *ſeeing*, than *recover* a *blinde* mans *eyes*.

Luk. 4. 38. 7. 10. John 5. 8, 9. 2 Kings 5. 14. Iſa. 38. 21. John 9. 6.

He ſtandeth *not* in *need* of *meanes*; but the moſt *probable* meanes ſtand *in need* of *him*. It is to put *honour* on the *creature* that God vouchſafeth to uſe it as an *inſtrument*; and when the *creature* becometh an *inſtrument* of any *good*, it is onely as in the *hand* of *God*, working with, and by it. For, tell me, when any are *recovered*, who is it that put the *medicinall* quality into the *drugs* which heale them, but the *God of Nature?* who giveth that *wit* and *skill* to man which *findeth* out their *qualityes*, and accordingly maketh *uſe* of them, but the *God of Knowledge?* Finally, who is it that commands a *bleſſing* upon, and giveth *ſucceſſe* to the *meanes*, but the *God of Power?* *Man liveth not by bread onely*, nor is the Patient cured by *Phyſick onely*, or *chiefly*, it is a *word proceeding from the mouth of God* that maketh the *one* effectuall for *continuation*, and the *other* for *reſtauration* of *health*.

Mat. 4. 4.

To *apply* this in a three-fold admonition:

1. Art thou *wicked?* As thou deſireſt *health* to be *preſerved*, or *renewed*, make thy *peace* with *God* by *repentance*: it is the ground upon which the *Jewiſh* Converts mutually exhort each other to this duty, *Come let us returne unto the Lord, for he hath torne, and he will heale us, he hath ſmitten, and he will binde*

Hoſ. 6. 1.

binde us up, though it be that indeed, which *God* out of his *Philanthropie* sometimes vouchsafeth, yet it is a fond *presumption* for any to expect that he should be a *Physitian* to *them* who are *enemies* to *him*. Me thinks an *ungodly* wretch should imagine that *God speaketh* to him in the *words* of the *Prophet*, *when thou cryest let thy companions deliver thee*; or, as he saith to the *children of Israel*, when they committed Idolatry, *Goe and cry unto the Gods which you have chosen*, the lusts which you have served, *let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation*. Had that *accusation* of *Rabshakeh* been true, his *argumentation* was *solid*, when he sent that *message* to *Hezekiah*, *But if thou say to me, we trust in the Lord our God, is it not hee, whose high Places, and whose Altars* Hezekiah *hath taken away?* And surely the *conscience* of a *wicked* man (if not *seared*) cannot but *check* him in the like expressions, *Wilt thou say I trust in God for health, or recovery? Is it not he whose Name thou hast blasphemed, Patience thou hast abused, and Worship thou hast neglected?* Be *wise* therefore, oh ye *sinners*, and *instructed* ye *wicked of the earth!* make him your *friend* who must be your *refuge*, *offer the sacrifice of righteousnesse*, and then, not till then, *put your trust in the Lord*. Your *life*, your *health* is in *his hands*; looke that your *doings* be *right*, and then your *persons* shall bee *precious* in his *eyes*.

Greatorem nobis propitium reddamus, qui potens est nostrum morbis afflig ere, tum sanare. Ephr. de vir. spirit. T. 1.

Isa. 57. 13. Iudges 10. 14. Isay 36. 7.

τοῦτο δὲ ἦν μικρὸν ἀρετὴ τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῷ θαρρεῖν, καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ πεποιθέναι μετὰ δὲ τῆς δικαιοσύνης. Chrys. in Psal. 4. 6.

2. Art thou *sick?* learne whom to *invocate*, and on whom to *depend* for *health*, upon no other than *God*.

Far be it from any of us in *sicknesse* (with *Saul* in *danger*) to *run* to the *Pythomise*, and *seek help* of the *Devill*. *Satans* best *cures* are deadly *wounds*; it is far *better* to *continue sick*, then by *such* meanes to *get health*. Since whilst thy mortall *body* is for a time *restored*, thy immortall *soule* is desperately *endangered*.

βέλτιον ἦν τὰς ἀῤῥωστίας μένειν ἢ διὰ τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν τῆς ἀσθενείας εἰς ἀσεβείαν καταπεσεῖν· κἂν γὰρ θεραπεύσῃ γόνος μείζον κατέβλαψεν ἢ ὠφέλησεν. Chrys. T. 7. de Morb. & Med.

Nor yet let us with the *Papists seeke* to any *Saints* as *Mediatours* with *God* for our *recovery*. Whilest They have their *severall Saints* for *severall Diseases*; *Sebastian* for the *Plague*, *Anthony* for the *Gangreen*, *Patronilla* for *Agues*, and *Benedict* for the *Stone*: Let us have *recourse* to the *one God* in *all Distrases*. Whilst they thinke it too great *sanctitie* to be

be their owne *ſpokes-men* to *God*; and therefore go to *ſaint ſomebody* to preferre their Petitions for them: let us hold it the beſt *manners* to go our *ſelves* of our *owne* errands to *God*, not doubting but that he, who bids us *come*, will bid us *welcome*.

2 Chron. 16. 12. Finally, let us not tread in *Aſa*'s foot-ſteps, who *ſought not to the Lord, but to the Phyſitians*; nor yet let us tread *Antipodes* to him in *ſeeking to the Lord, and not to the Phyſitians*, whileſt he *affoards* them: but as *Gideon* commanded his *Souldiers* to cry, *the ſword of the Lord, and of Gideon*; ſo let us ever *ſay, the bleſſing of the Lord, and the skill of the Phyſitian*. Indeed where *opportunity* is vouchſafed, thoſe *two* muſt *not* be *ſevered*. *God* will not *uſually* help *without meanes*, and therefore they muſt be *uſed*; the meanes cannot *poſſibly* help *without God*; and therefore in the *uſe* of them his *bleſſing* muſt be *implored*. They are *equally* bad to *neglect* and to *reſt* on ſecond cauſes, to expect ſuccour either *from* them *originally*, or *without* them *inſtrumentally*, to rely on *God without meanes*, or truſt to *meanes without God*. Surely, what the *King* ſaid to

2 Kings. 6. 27. the *woman*, *If the Lord doe not help thee, whence ſhall I help thee?* that all *creatures* ſay to us in any *diſtreſſe*, *If the Lord help not, whence ſhall we? except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vaine that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the watchman watcheth but in vain*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*. Indeed he doth not ſay *quia, becauſe the Lord buildes the houſe*, but *niſi*, as excluding *humane* diligence: but *except the Lord build*, thereby including *divine* providence: nor doth he onely ſay, *niſi dominus conſenſerit, adjuverit*, but *niſi ædificaverit, cuſtodierit, unleſſe the Lord conſent*, (a word which *onely* implyeth his *will*) or *unleſſe the Lord help*, which *extendeth* to *any* kinde of *aſſiſtance* (the *meaneſt* thing that concurreth to any work, being *cauſa adjuvans*, an *auxiliary* cauſe) but *unleſſe the Lord build and keep*, which imply the *concurrence* of his *power*, as well as *will*, and that as the *principall* agent in the *building* and *keeping*: the *ſame* aſſertion is *no leſſe true* in this

Luke 4. 23. *preſent* caſe, *except the Lord heale the patient, the Phyſitian adminiſtreth but in vaine. Heal thy ſelf*, is only true of *that Phyſitian*, to whom it was ſpoken: no other *Phyſitian* can of himſelf either

Pſal. 127. 1. *Fruſtra eſt omnis humana diligentia niſi divina accedat providentia.* Muſc. ibid.

Id ibid.

either heale *himſelfe* or *others*. *Tangit te Rex, Sanat te Deus*, was no leſſe *truly* than *humbly* ſpoken when the *Royall* touch was given, *The King toucheth thee, God cureth thee.* It is ſo here, the *Phyſitian* preſcribes the *medicine*, but *God* by that commands *health.* Oh therefore that *Phyſitians* in *adminiſtring*, *patients* in *receiving*, would onely *depend* upon, and *ſue* for *divine* Benediction, when the one *writes* a *recipe* with his *pen*, let him *pray* with his *heart*; when the other *receiveth* the *potion* into his *ſtomach*, let him *lift up his eyes* to *God*, who ſaith of himſelfe, *I am the Lord that healeth thee.* Exod. 15. 26.

3. Art thou *recovered?* know whom to *praiſe*, and to whom to *aſcribe* the *cure*: could the *ingredients* of thy *medicine* ſpeak, each would ſay of *health*, as the *depths* and the *Seas*, of *wiſdome*, *It is not in me*: It is, I am ſure, the *voice* of all *pious Phyſitians*, *non nobis*, *not to us* (*oh man*) *not to us*, *but to God be the praiſe of thy recovery.* And therefore whilſt the *Atheiſt* looketh no further than *nature* and *art*, let the *Chriſtian* look higher at *God* and his *bleſſing*: and as he muſt not forget that *reſpect* which is *due* to the *Phyſitian*, as the *Inſtrument*, ſo let the *chiefeſt* honour be given to *God* as being the *principall* efficient. The truth is, for the moſt part, ſuch is our *fooliſhneſſe*, that whileſt we fix our *eyes* upon the *bleſſings* we receive, we turne our *backs* upon the *God* that beſtoweth them, and we are more ready to *father* them upon *any other* than *him*, who is the true *donor* of them. Oh let not onely *gratitude* but *juſtice*, teach us to give *God* his *due*, when we *gather* the *fruit* let us *caſt* downe our *eyes* on the *root* from which they ſprout, when we *feed* upon the *acornes*, let us *lift* them up to the *tree* from whence they fall, and being *refreſhed* by the flowing *ſtreame*, let us *reflect* upon the ſpringing *fountaine.* *Oh my God, it is in thee that I live, let me live to thee; from thee I have received health, to thee I returne praiſe; I have the comfort, take thou the glory of thy great mercy.* And ſo I paſſe forward to the Iob 28. 14. Peter 5. 1.

Faciem quodammodo ponentes ad ea quæ fecit, dorſum ponimus ad artificem qui fecit.

Si quando nobis profperi aliquid præter ſpem noſtram & meritum deus tribuit, alius aſcribit hoc fortunæ, alius eventui, alius conſilio, nullus deo.

Salv. de Cub. l. 7.

2. *Excellency* of the *Benefit*, how expreſſed, in thoſe words, *Had mercy on him.*

In *mercy* there are *two* things conſiderable, *affectus*, and *effectus*, the *paſſion*, and the *action*, the inward *pitty*, and the out-

owtward *bounty*, that is in the *heart*, this in the *hand*; that the *bowels* of mercy, this the *works* of mercy; that called by the *Greekes* ἔλεος, and this ἐλεήμοσυνη, and *both* theſe, though not in the *ſame* ſenſe, are *attributed* to *God*, and here to be *underſtood*.

Miſericordia nonnullis quoſdam eorum cor facit. Aug contr. adv. leg. l. 1. c. 20. *Miſericors dicitur aliquis quaſi, miſerum cor habens.* Aquin p. 2. prim. q. 21. art. 3. Iſa. 63. 6. Ierem 31. 20. Pſal. 103. 16. *Nobis non ſibi loquitur, atque ideo noſtris utitur in loquendo.* Hilar. in Pſ. 126 μέγα ἀτυχοῦντι φάρμακον ἔλεος. Καὶ τὸ συναλγεῖν γνησίως πολύ τι κερδίζει τῆς εὐμφορᾶς. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16. *Miſericordia eſt alienæ miſeriæ in eo de noſtro compaſſio quâ utique (ſi poſſimus) ſubvenire compellimur.* Aug. de civit. dei. l. 9. c. 8.

1. In *mercy* there is a *laying* of anothers *miſery* to *heart*, The *Greeke* word ἐλεέω is derived from the *Hebrew* אלה which ſignifieth *Ejulare*, *plangere*, to *bewaile* and *lament*: a *condolency* with our Brothers *calamity*, being a choice *ingredient* of *mercy*. This is that which the *Holy Ghoſt* aſſerteth of *God* in Scripture, where it is ſaid, *in all their afflictions he was afflicted*: And againe, *My bowels are troubled*: And againe, *Like as a Father pittyeth his Children, ſo the Lord pittyeth them that feare him*: But withall, we muſt know, that in theſe *Phraſes* the *moſt high* is pleaſed to *condeſcend*, and ſpeaking *to men*, to ſpeak of himſelfe, *as if* he were *a man*. There is not then any ſorrow or *compaſſion* in him who is *impaſſible*, but by this is repreſented his *good will* towards his people, whereby he is *propenſe* to ſuccour them. And becauſe the *afflicted* perſon findes oft times much *eaſe* and ſolace in that *ſympathie*, which another expreſſeth towards him, that we may know the *like* ſolace is to be found in *God*, this *compaſſion* is *attributed* to *God*; and indeed is, though not *formally*, yet *æquivalently*, nay *eminently* verified of him. To bring this home, in that *God* is ſaid to *have mercy* on dying *Epaphroditus*, it implyeth thus much, that *God beholding* and taking *notice of*, was as it were *affected* with his imminent *danger*, having after a ſort a *friendly* pitty, and *motherly* yearning, or rather a *fatherly* good-will towards *him*. But this is not all that *mercy* includeth, and therefore know,

2. In *mercy* there is an *indeavour* to *relieve* him whoſe *miſery* it *condoleth*, as ſhe *ſuffereth with*, ſo ſhe *doth for*, and (according to her *ability*) either *helpeth* him to *beare* the *burden* by *putting* under her *ſhoulder*, or wholly *eaſeth* him of it by *removing* it from his *ſhoulder*. Hence the definition of mercy is well given to be *ſuch a compaſſion of anothers miſery, as puts upon a cheerfull imploying our power for the ſuſtaining him under, and delivering him out of it*. This is that which

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in a *proper* and genuine ſenſe agreeth to *God*, whoſe *property* is to *deliver his* out of their *afflictions*, and *preſerve* them from *deſtruction*: and this no doubt, is that which our *Apoſtle* here eſpecially *intends* in this expreſſion, *God had mercy on him*, that is, he did *remove* his *miſery*, and *prevent* his *death* by *curing* him of that *ſickneſſe* which had brought him *nigh* to it.

Triſtari de miſeriâ alterius non competit Deo, ſed repellere miſeriam alterius hoc maximè ei competit. Aquin. par. prim. qu. 21. a. 3.

Let the ſame minde be in us that is in *God*: when our brethren are under *ſickneſſe*, or any other *diſtreſſe*, to *have mercy on them*. It was our bleſſed *Saviours* reaſoning with the *Phariſees*, though not altogether to the ſame purpoſe, *which of you ſhall have an Aſſe or an Ox fall into the pit, and will not ſtraightway pull him out?* Surely *one man* is of more worth then *many Aſſes*; and ſhall we not, in what we may, *ſuccour* him when fallen into ſome grievous *ſickneſſe*?

Notum miſericordiæ pro opere. Zanch. in loc. *Dicitur miſericordia, quod miſeriæ expulſum eſt Remotio,* Eſt. ibid.

That good *Samaritan* in the *Type* is no other than *Chriſt* in the *Truth*, who pityed and *healed man* when dangerouſly *wounded* by *ſinne*, and as it was the *deſigne* of his *death* to cure mankinde of his *ſpirituall* ſickneſſe, ſo his *practiſe* in the courſe of his life to *go about doing good and healing*. If we call our ſelves *Chriſtians*, whom ſhould we *imitate* but *Chriſt*, by performing all *offices* of love to the *ſick*, which lye within our Spheare? and if we have no *oyle* but that of *compaſſion*, no *wine* but *teares* and *prayers*, let them be *poured* into the wounds and *diſeaſes* of thy *neighbour*; ſo ſhall we bee *Diſciples of Chriſt*. But the *Text* leads us yet one *ſtep* higher from *Chriſt*, as *man*, and as *God-man*, to *Chriſt* as *God*, acquainting us with *Gods mercy* to a *ſick* man: and what more befitting *man* then to *imitate God* by practiſing this *God-like* worke of mercy. μέγα καὶ τίμιον ἀνθρώπου ἔλεήμων, ὁ μερικὸς ἀνθρωπος ὁ ἀνθρωπος. &c. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16. ἀνθρωπος ὁ ἀρᾶν ἱκετευσαλλήμ ὁ παιδδεισθς, ἱκετεχω ὁ κόσμος λῆσαι ὑπερπορεῦοι λόγισμός

χὴ παθεῖσι, σαμαείτης ὁ χεὶς. Athanaſ. qu. 15. de parab. δὸς ἀντιμεγάλω πεοθυμίαν ἔι μηδὲν ἔχης δάκευσον, Greg. Naz. Orat. 16. *A Chriſto diſci eſt Chriſtiani; nam eâ viâ quâ Chriſtus ambulavit, & vos debetis ambulare.* Bern. Ser. ad paſt. Pr. 20. 6. Sept. *Vere Magnus quo divinæ operis interpres eſt ut imitatur.* Amb. in Pſ. 118. τὶ ἄλλοι χὴ ἢ θεὸν σε πεοσκαλεῖται γενέδαι ὁ λόγος, οὐκεὶ μεμὴν δύνατα τῷ τῆς θεότητος ἰδιώματι. Greg. Nyſ. de Beat. Or. 5. χεὴ τῶ ἀτυχοῦντι διὸ ὁ ἔλεος θεῦ μιμησάμενος. Greg. Naz. Orat. 16.

man is great and honourable, and that for this reason chiefly, because he is *like* to *God*, in which respect *Gregory Nyssen*, and *Nazianzen* call such a *man* a *God*, as having *stampt* upon him the *Character* of a *Deity*. *Bee yee therefore followers of God as deare Children*, is Saint *Paul*'s counsell in *generall*, *Be you mercifull, as your Father also is mercifull*, so our blessed *Saviour* adviseth in *speciall*: and yet more *particularly*, as *God had mercy on sick* Epaphroditus, so let *us* on our *sick* neighbour, by *visiting* him, (if we can by our *skill* or *counsell* doe him good) however by *compassionating* him, and *interceding* with *God* in his behalfe.

Eph. 6. 1.
Luke 6. 36
Nihil dignius quam ut homo sit autoris sui imitator, & secundum modum propriæ facultatis divini sit operis executor.
Leo de quadr. Serm. 5.

And because this *duty* is that which (though so *honourable*) we are *averse* from; give me leave to carry it a little further, & let you see it is *profitable*, as well as honourable. Not only that you may *follow God* in *mercy*, but that you may upon the like occasion *obtain mercy* from *God*, *shew mercy* to others. It is a sweet *promise* to feed on in a time of sickness. *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.* That *bed* must needs be *easie* which *God maketh*, nor can he *faint*, whom *God strengtheneth*; but to whom is it made? *him* and *none* but him *who considereth the poore*, so our Translation, but the *Hebrew* word דל may as well be rendered *sick*, one that is *weakned* by a *disease*: he who *considereth others* in their *sickness*, shall be *supported* by *God* in *his*. Which of us, beloved, doth not *desire* that *God* may shew that *mercy* to *us* in our *distresse*, which he did here to *Epaphroditus*? But how can we *expect God* should *grant* that to *us*, which we *deny* to *others*? *Blessed are the mercifull*, saith *Christ*, *for they shall obtaine mercy*: Be then oh man to thy selfe, a *patterne* of mercy, and shew with that *speed*, and in that *degree*, *mercy* to thy *sick*, weak, languishing *neighbour*, which thou wouldst have *God* vouchsafe to *thee* in the *like* condition. But a little more to *unbowell* this Clause.

Psal. 41. 3
Prospicit pauperi, ægro ægroto, attenuato.
Vatabl ibid.
Improbus petitor, qui quod alii negat sibi postulat. Homo esto tibi misericordia forma, sic quomodo vis quantum vis, quam cito vis misericordiam tibi fieri, tam cito alii, tantum, taliter ipsum servire.
Chrysol. Serm. 43.

The *mercy* here intended (as you have already heard) was the *prolongation* of *life*, and *restauration* of *health* to *Epaphroditus*: and here a double *question* falls in to be resolved,

How this can be called a mercy? And

If a mercy in it selfe, yet how a mercy to him?

Matt. 5. 7.
Vita mari est similis, namque ut mare vita procellas: Hæc habet & ventos naufragiumque frequens.
Anth. sacr.

Quest.

Qu. 1. It is a plausible *Objection* which is made, that *life* prolonged is *no* mercy, because it is a calamitous *continuance* in an *evil* world: what is this *world* but a *Coffer* of *Sorrows*, *Labyrinth* of *Troubles*, *Schoole* of *Vanity*, *Market* of *Fraud*, *Theater* of *Tragedyes*, *Flood* of *Teares*, and *Map* of *Ruines*? And can it be a *favour* for a man to *continue* long in a *place* of *miseries*? The *earth* we tread on, the *aire* we breath in, are as a *Sea*, wherein windes and *stormes* are ever blowing; and can it be a *favour* to be still *tossed* up and downe upon a *blustering* tempestuous Sea? Finally, this life is not a *life* but a *calamity*, yea, rather a *death* then a *life*, because so *miserable*: to *live long* is to be *long tormented*, and can this be a *mercy*?

ὐ βίος ἀλλὰ θάνατος ὁ βίος, ἀλλὰ σύμφορος. *Philem.* *Tanta est tribulatio hujus miseræ vitæ, ut nec vita sit dicenda, sed potius mors, vel quippiam aliud morte deterius.* Idiot de pati. *Quid est diu vivere nisi diu torqueri.* Aug. de verb. dom. Serm. 17

Answ. To all this it is *briefly*, but *fully* answered. That though there be many *evils* in the *world*, yet the *world* is not *evil*, nor is it *evil* to *abide* in the *world*. These *miseries* are only *accidental* to *life*, and so hinder not, but that *preservation* from *death* is a *mercy*. And therefore the *Greek* Fathers upon this *Scripture* do hence most rationally *confute* the *Manichees*, who affirme the *world* in its owne nature to *be bad*, τι λέγεις ὦ αἱρέτικε so St. *Chrysostome*, ὦ μανιακὲ. So *Theophilact* in *particular*. *What sayest thou to this, oh hereticall Manichee?* If the *world* be *wicked*, and the *life* which we now live in it, how doth the *Apostle* call this a *mercy* of *God*, that he *lengthened Epaphroditus* his dayes? The *other life* is *better* than this, surely then *this* must be *good*, an *immature death* is threatned, and inflicted as a *judgement*, surely then the *continuance* of *life* must be a *mercy*, as those forementioned *Fathers excellently* argue,

Chrysost. } in
Theoph. } loc.
Oecum. }

καλὸν ἦ παρῆσα ζωὴ αὐτὴ καθ' ἑαυτὴν. *Theoph. ibid.*

Life is a mercy, and yet *health* is a *greater* mercy. Ἄριστον ὑγιαίνειν was written upon the porch of *Apollo's* Temple, *health* is the *Princesse* of *earthly blessings*: and *Plato* tells us that ἄριστον ὑγιαίνειν was *sung* by every one to his *Harpe* at the *Schooles*, and at *Festivals*. *Beauty*, *riches*, *health*, were the *three things Pythagoras* said should *chiefly* be *implored* of the *Gods*; but among them *health* the *chiefe*: indeed, it is that which maketh *life* it selfe to be a *mercy*, since *non est vivere sed valere vita*, *To live is not so much to breath, as to be well.*

Aristot. Eth. l. 1. c. 8
Plat. in Gorg.
Matt. Ep. 70. l. 6.

Mercies then they are (*especially*) when *conjoyned*, and being so

Vna eſt cæcitas quæ nos alligatos tenet, amor vitæ qui ut non eſt abjiciendus, ita minuendus eſt. Sen. Ep. 27.

so in their owne *nature*, ought so to be *esteemed* of by us: in which respect we ought to *pray* and *give thanks* for them as *blessings*. It is no lesse a fault to *undervalue*, then to *over-prize* our lives and health: this *latter* (I confesse) is the more *common*, but the *former* is no lesse *culpable*: we must not be so much in *love* with *life* as to *dote* upon it, because it is *short*, yet we may so farre *love*, as to *desire*, and endeavour that it *may*, yea, with the *Apostle* here, *account* it a *mercy*, when *it is prolonged*.

Corpus infra animam est & quævis anima vilis excellentissimo corpore excellentior invenitur. Aug. in Ps. 145.

I end this, If *deliverance* from *death* be a *mercy*, how *great* a mercy is *deliverance* from *hell?* If it be a *blessing* to have the *danger* of a *mortall disease prevented*, Oh what is it to have the *guilt* of our *deadly sinnes pardoned?* Finally, if the *health* of the *body* be a *favour*, how *choice* a benefit is the *soules health?* Surely by how much *hell* is *worse* then *death*, *sin* then *sickneſſe*, yea, by how much the *soule* is *better* than the *body*, by so much is the *one* to be *preferred* before the *other*. *Oh my soule, thou wast sick, desperately sick of sinne, so sick that thou wast not only nigh to death, but dead in sinnes, and trespasses; but God had mercie on thee, he hath sent his Sonne to heale, to revive thee, by being himselfe wounded, nay, slain: and his Spirit to cure, to quicken thee by killing thy sinne, and renewing thy nature. Thou art indebted to thy God for temporall, much more for spirituall: Blesse the Lord, oh my soule, for thy life of nature, health of thy body; but let all that is within thee praise his holy name for thy life of grace, and eternall salvation.*

Chrysost. in loc. Mors pœnis finem omnibus, malis in hac vita, dat terminum malis in hoc sæculo, adimit omnem calamitatem. Bern. de mod. viv. Serm. 30.

Qu. 2. But it is further *inquired*, though this *recoverie* were a *mercy* in it *selfe*, yet how could it be so *to Epaphroditus* a godly man? Had it been deliverance *by death*, this were a mercy *indeed*; but deliverance *from death* seemeth rather an *injury* than a *courtesie*, πρὸς μὲν τὸν ἀσεβέστατον ἔυκολον εἰπεῖν πρὸς δ[illegible] χαλεπὸν τί ἐρεῖμεν, we may easily *refell* the *Heretick*, but how shall we *answer* the *Christians* who *desiring to be dissolved* knoweth not how to *esteeme* the *deferring* his dissolution a *mercy?* Had *Epaphroditus* been a wicked man, it had been a *great* mercy to *spare* him, that he might *make* his *peace* with *God* by the practice of *faith* and *repentance*; but to *him*, whose *peace* was *alreadie* made, what *advantage* could the *prolonging*

longing of his *life* afford? *Death* it ſelfe to a *good* man is a *deliverance*, a *totall*, *finall* deliverance from all ſorrow and miſery for ever: And can that be a *deliverance*, which *keepeth off* our *deliverance? per Anguſta pervenitur ad auguſta*, This *red Sea* leads to *Canaan*; through the *valley* of *death* we paſſe to the *mount* of *glory*: And can that be a *mercy* which *retardeth* our *felicity?* Is it a courteſie for a man to be *detained* from his *wages*, and *held* to *labour?* to be *hindred* from *reſt*, and *called* to *worke?* to be *withheld* from his *country*, and *wander* in a *wilderneſſe?* Finally, to be *kept out* of a *Palace*, and *confined* to a *Priſon?* And yet, *all* this is *true* of a *godly* man, who when *nigh to death*, is called back againe to *live longer* in this *world*.

Moritur quidem juſtus ſed ſomne, quippe cujus mors ut præſentis exitus eſt vitæ, ita introitus melioris. id. Ep. 105. *Erit jamna vita, initium refrigerii erit, ſanctæ illius mentis ſcala & ingreſſus in locum tabernaculi.* Id. in ſerm.

Anſw. To *anſwer this*, though upon thoſe forementioned *conſiderations*, it *cannot* be denyed but that *death* is a *mercy* to a *Saint*; yet *thoſe* hinder not, but that in *other* reſpects the *continuance* of *life* is a *mercy*, even to a *godly* man. As for that κοινὴ συνήθεια, which the *Greek* Fathers ſpeak of, as if Saint *Pauls* language were more according to *cuſtome* than *truth*, and that when he calls *recovery* a *mercy*, he rather ſpeaketh as *men doe account*, than as *it is indeed*, it ſeemes to me ſomewhat *harſh*, that τὸ κερδᾶναι Ψυχὰς, the *opportunity* of *gaining* more *ſouls* to *God*, which this *preſervation* afforded him, is a farre more rationall *ſolution*. Upon this account it was Saint *Paul* looked upon the prolongation of his *owne life* as *needfull*: So he expreſſeth it in the former Chapter. And here, for the ſame reaſon, he calleth the *reſtauration* of *Epaphroditus* to health a *mercy*. To this purpoſe Saint *Hieromes note* upon the Text is very *appoſite*, *Miſertus eſt ejus ut majorem docendo colligat fructum*, *God had mercy on him*, that he, being a *Miniſter*, might by the *preaching* of the *Goſpel*, *gather* in more *ſoules*, and doe more good.

Chryſoſt.] *in* Theoph. } *loc*

Chriſoſt. ibid. ἕλεον λέγει τὴν ἐντεῦθα ζωὴν. Καὶ φαμὲν ὅτι δι' ἣν αἰτίαν ἄνω εἶπεν ἀναγκαιότερον δὲ τὸ ἐπιμεῖναι ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ δι' ὑμᾶς. Oecu. in Loc. Phil. 1. 24. Hieron. in loc.

Obj. But you will *ſay*, this ſeemes not to be a full Anſwer: Indeed, had the *Apoſtle* ſaid, *but God had mercy on you*, namely the *Philippians*, this would be very *ſuitable*; the *recovery* of a faithfull *Miniſter* is, no doubt, a *mercy* to the *People*; but ſtill it remaineth a *doubt*, how the *Apoſtle* could ſay, as here he doth, *God had mercy on him*, to wit, *Epaphroditus*.

Repl. To which I *reply*, That the *opportunity* of this *ſervice* was not onely a *benefit* to the *Church*, but a *mercy* to *him*, in as much as by this meanes.

Conſiderandum eſt non eſſe parvam dignationē quum ſe Deus in nobis glorificat. Calv. in Io.

1. He became a *greater inſtrument* of *Gods glory*; It is an high *honour*, which *God* vouchſafeth to that man, whom he makes *uſe* of to *ſerve* and *honour* him; and to a *pious* ſoule *nothing* is *dearer* than *Gods glory*, deſiring rather to *glorify God* than to be *glorifyed with him*: this Saint *Paul* declares to his *hope*, yea, his *earneſt expectation*, that *Chriſt might be magnifyed in his body whether by life or death*. No wonder then, if conſidering how much *Epaphroditus* his *life* might *conduce* to *Gods glory*, he *reckoned* it as a *mercy*. Beſides,

Phil. 1. 20.

Qui Chriſto vivunt, ſalutiter in ſpem gloriæ cœleſtis exercentur. Calv. ibid. Dan. 12. 2.

2. He *increaſed* his *owne reward*; the *longer* a *good man*, eſpecially a *good Miniſter* liveth, the *more* ſinners he *converteth*, and *they that turne many to righteouſneſſe*, ſaith *Daniel*, *ſhall ſhine as the ſtarres for ever and ever*, nay, *every ſoule* that a faithfull *Miniſter winnes* to *God*, is as a new *gemme* added to that *Crown*, which ſhall one day be *put* upon his *head*.

Thus then the *caſe* ſtands; *Epaphroditus* indeed, by *dying*, had *received* his *reward*, but by *living* he *did* the more *ſervice*; by *dying* he had *obtained glory from God*, but by *living* he *brought glory to God*: and our bleſſed *Saviour* ſaith, *It is a more bleſſed thing to give than to receive*; by *dying* he had *enjoyed* his *recompence ſooner*, by *living* he *made* it *greater*, *that* would have *accelerated*, but *this augmented* it, ſo that even in reſpect of his *owne* future *happineſſe* he was no *loſer* but a *gainer* by the *prolonging* of his *life*, and therefore moſt juſtly doth Saint *Paul* ſay, *God had mercy on him*.

Act. 20. 35.

Briefly, and yet *clearely* to ſtate the whole matter.

Life and *death* may be *conſidered* and *compared foure* wayes,

1. In their formall *nature*, and ſo *death* is a *privation*, *life* a *poſition* of *good*; and therefore *death evil*, and *life good*,

2. In their *Cauſes*, *death* is a *fruit* of *ſin*, *life* an *effect* of *love*; our *wickedneſſe* deſerved the one, *Gods goodneſſe* conferreth the other; in which reſpect, *death* is *threatned* as a *puniſhment*, *life promiſed* as a *reward*.

3. In their naturall and proper *effects*, *death* bereaveth as well

well *godly*, as *wicked* men of the *ſociety* of *friends*, *poſſeſſion* of their *eſtates*, yea, all the *comforts* which this world affords, whereas by *life* we have the *fruition* of them continued to us, ſo that in this regard alſo, *life* is farre *better* than *death*, even to a *good* man.

4. Laſtly, in their accidentall *conſequents*, when a *wicked* man *dyeth* there followeth *torment*, but whileſt he *liveth* there is *hope* of his *repentance*, yea, many times it ſo falls out, ſome *come* into the *Vineyard* at the *eleaventh houre*, and to ſuch *life* is a *choice* mercy indeed: when a *godly* man *dyeth* he is *carried into Abrahams boſome*, *placed* in a ſtate of *bliſſe*; but by *living longer* he *honoureth God*, *edifieth* the *Church*, *worketh* out his *ſalvation*; he gaineth both the more time to *prepare* himſelfe for, get *aſſurance* of, yea, make an *addition* to his future glory, and therefore in *this* likewiſe, and ſo in *all* compariſons *life* hath the *preheminence*, and the continuance of it is juſtly called by the *Apoſtle* a *mercy*.

To cloſe up this, *life* continued, *health* reſtored, are *mercies*; oh let not us by *abuſing* them to *ſinne* turne them into *judgement*, who can *believe* it? and yet we may often *ſee* it, men change *bleſſings* into *curſes* by their iniquities, and as *Pariſienſis* excellently expreſſeth it, *Ipſa beneficia ſibi faciunt pœnalia & inſtrumenta contra ſeipſos divinæ juſtitiæ, They make benefits to become punishments, and the fruits of Gods mercy inſtruments of his juſtice.* The truth is, it was not ſo much *life* as the right *uſe*, Saint *Paul* conceived *Epaphroditus* would make of his life, which moved him to *call* it a *mercy*, *Multis periculo & peſtilens ſanitas fuit qui tutius ægrotaſſent*: Indeed theſe things are *good* or *evill* to us according as we *imploy* them. It had been a *greater* mercy to many *impenitent* ſinners that they had continued *ſick*, or *dyed*, then that they were *recovered*. Let us therefore *lay out* our *life*, our *health*, according to our ſeverall places, in *Gods* ſervice, ſo ſhall it prove *glory* to *God*, *benefit* to *others*, and a *mercy* to *us*: *Oh my ſoule, thou haſt received, as it were, a new life, improve it in new obedience; health is reſtored to thy body, imploy it in the ſervice of thy God: why ſhould thy honey be turned into gall, thy ſhield into a ſword, thy delicates into poyſon? Oh let thy life be expended by thee, as it was intended*

Quis hoc tribuere queat, ut animus naturam rerum iniquitatibus noſtris, &c. Salv. de Gub. l. 6. Pariſ. de Univerſo prim. part. pars tertia. c. 9. Petrarch dial. de vitæ. cont. *Eſt perniciosa ſanitas quæ ad inobedientiam ducit.* Bern. de inter. dom.

by God, so shalt thou have cause to take up the Apostles language, God had mercy on me. And thus much shall suffice for the second particular, I hasten to the

3. *Opportunity* of the *time*, which is the last branch implyed in the *exceptive But*. And a *comfortable But* it is; indeed, the *sickness*, like a *flood* was *carrying* him away, *God* puts in a *But* and *stops* its current; *Epaphroditus* was *falling* into the *pit*, *But God reacheth* forth an *hand* to *uphold* him. *God* doth not *so preserve* him that the *sickness* should *not come*, nay, when it is *come* he doth not *hinder* it from *increasing*, but when it is *come* to the *height*, then he *rebuketh* the *disease*, and saith, *hitherto thou shalt come and no further*. All *hopes* of his *recovery* in *mans eyes* are *perished*, and lo, he is *raised* by the *hand* of *God*. *Means* either are *not afforded*, or however *unable* to *help*. *God* becommeth his *Physitian*, and *commandeth* the *cure*. It lets us see thus much, that

Jo. 5. 7. *En horam tuam domine, ades enim deus cui homo deest.* Velasq. in Phil. *Herodes gentis judaicæ invasit regnum libertatem sustulit, prophanavit stirpes; quicquid cultum est, abolevit, merito ergo genti sanctæ quia humana desunt, divina succurrant.* Chrisol. serm. 116.

When all hopes are liveless, and helps seem fruitless, then is the season of Gods deliverance. That *childs* condition is very *sad*, *whom the father and mother forsake*; but then the *Psalmist* finds *God ready* to *take him up*: And the *causall* particle in the Originall is very considerable, not onely *when*, but *because* he was as a *forsaken* babe, *God* vouchsafeth to *protect* and *provide* for him; our *extremity* being not onely the *opportunity when*, but a *motive why* God will deliver. It was a dolefull *complaint* which the poore *Creeple* made to *Christ*, ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἔχω, *I have not a man to put me into the poole*, but even that *narration* is an efficacious *prayer*; *The absence of mans help, being the season of Christs presence and succour*. Saint *Paul* speaking of our blessed Saviours *Incarnation*, saith, it was *when the fulnesse of time came*; if you will know when that full time was, the *Evangelist* answereth, it was *in the dayes of Herod the King*: and if with *Chrysologus* you looke into those dayes, you shall find them *dayes* of extreame *misery* to the *Jewish* Nation, their *Temple profaned*, *Liberty suppressed*, *Worship abolished*, and the *whole State full of confusion*. In those *dayes* was the *fulnesse*, because indeed the *fitnesse* of time come for him, who was the *Redeemer*, to *appeare*, and the *horne of salvation to be raised up*. In which respect the *Messiah* is called by *Moses* a

fit

fit man, or according to the *Originall*, *a man of opportunity*. *Thy way oh God is in the ſea, and thy paths in the great waters*, Pſal. 77. 19. ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*. By which expreſſions no doubt he *chiefly* intends (as appeares by what followeth) to *note* the imperceptible *ſecrecie* attending upon many of *Gods* diſpenſations, ſo that we can *no more diſcerne* the *reaſon* of them, than we can any *impreſſion* of a *ſhips paſſage* in the *Sea*, but yet withall it is not an improbable *alluſion* to underſtand *Sea* and *great waters* repreſenting doleful and *perillous* diſtreſſes: Gods uſual courſe being to *manifeſt* himſelf not in the *ſhallow* river of a *ſlight* trouble, but the *deep* ſea of ſome *deſperate* calamity. The *Diſciples enter into a ſhip*, but *Chriſt comes not*, the ſable *mantle* of the *night* covers them, and *Chriſt cometh not*, the *winde* bloweth, the *ſtorme* rageth, the *waves* ariſe, and *yet Chriſt appeareth not*, but when they have *rowed* 25. *or* 30. *furlongs*, *being farre from land*, and in the *depth of danger*, then they *ſee Jeſus walking on the Sea*, and drawing *nigh* to the *ſhip* to *ſuccour* them. To this purpoſe is S. *Cyrills* obſervation upon this *ſtorie*, *Chriſt* doth not preſently at the *beginning* of the ſtorme *appeare* to his *Diſciples*, but when they had *rowed far from land*. *Chriſt* is not alwayes at *hand* upon the firſt *onſet*, but when through *prevailing fear*, & almoſt over-whelming *danger*, our *ſpirits* begin to *fail*, then he *breaks forth* as it were in the *midſt* of the *waves*, *calming* the *ſtorm*, *expelling* our *feare*, and *preventing* our *ruine*.

Ioh. 6. 19. ἐπιτήδει ὅπως ἂν ἐυδύς ἀποπλέυσαιν ἀεὶ γὰρ ἐν ἀρχῇ τῶν κινδύνων τοῖς ἔν τῷ σκάφει χεῖς & ἐπιφόιτᾶλαι. Cy. Alex. in Joh.

It is very obſervable in that hundred and ſeventh *Pſalme*, when the *Prophet* celebrateth *Gods* goodneſſe to *ſeverall* ſorts of men in their *dangers*, that their *deliverance* was not *vouchſafed* till their *danger* appeared *remedileſs*: of travellers it is ſaid, they *wandered ſo long in the wildernes*, *till by reaſon of hunger and thirſt their ſoule fainted in them*, *and then*, not till then upon their *crying the Lord delivered them*; The *Captives* are ſaid to *ſit in darkneſſe and the ſhadow of death*, *by reaſon of their bonds*, yea, to *fall downe and none to help them*, and *then* this *want of help obtaineth help*, at their earneſt *cry God ſaveth them out of their diſtreſſe*; when *ſick*, men are brought ſo low that their *ſoule abhorreth all manner of meat*, *and they draw nigh to the gates of death*, then *God ſendeth his Word and healeth them*: finally, the *Seamans ſoule is melted becauſe of trouble*, *they reele*

Pſal. 107. 3, 4, 5. ὃ δὲ χωλεσμὸς τῆς δυναμεως ἐυρεθεὶν βοήθεια. Greg. Nyſſ. Tract in Pſ. ver. 10, 12, 13, ver. 18, 20.

to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, yea, are at their wits
Vsr. 26.17,18, 19. *end*, not knowing what course to take, ere *God begins to make the storme a calme*, and so *bringeth them out of their distresse*. Thus God, as he can, so usually he doth help *at a pinch*, when *Jacob* wants *bread* at *home*, *Joseph* is *heard* of *abroad*: when the *Prodigall* wants *abroad*, he is *minded* of *going home*; and
Psal 142.24. when we looke with *David on the right hand*, and *there is no man*, yea, on the left hand, nay round about us, and all refuge faileth us,

Restat iter cœli,

we may *looke up* to *God*, and *God* is ready to *looke downe* from *heaven* and *help us*.

And now if you shall inquire *why God* is pleased to cull out *such a time* of succour, when in *extremis* perill, of *curing*, when *sick nigh to death*: I *answer*, it is both in reference to *himselfe* and *us*.

In regard of *himself*,

1. *Partly* that it may appeare to be *his worke*, Those effects in the production of which, God is as it were *causa socia* a *copartner*, making use of *probable* meanes, too often the *instrument* is *more* looked upon than *God*; but those effects wherein he is *causa solitaria*, the sole agent (effecting them as it were by his owne hand) enforce men to acknowledge it is *his doing*. *Quando humana omnem spem negant, tunc divina dispensatio clare fulget*, In the *day*-time, when other *starres* appeare not, we know the *light* which *shines* is onely from the *Sun*; so when *secundary* meanes succeed not to *whom* but *God* can the *patient ascribe* his *recovery*? and for this reason, *ne opus cœlestis dextræ assignaretur virtuti humanæ*, that the *creature* may not *rob* him of *his glory*, *he chuseth* that *time* to deliver when the creature can afford *no* succour.

Velasq. in Phil. *Permittit Deus crescere pericula ut periclitantium merita augeantur: extremè autem periclitantibus opem fert ut suam potentiam demonstret.* Mend. in lib. 3. Reg. cap. 2. n. 6.

2. *Chiefly*, that in such works he may appear *to be a God*, in as much as his *Almighty* power and mercy, hereby become *illustrious*: it is the prayer of *David*, *Shew thy marvailous loving kindenesse*; the *Septuagint* and *vulgar* (agreeing in this with the *Hebrew*) render it, *make thy mercyes wonderfull*, and surely when our *misery* is most *dolefull*, *Gods mercy* is most *wonderfull*, and therefore, saith Saint *Gregory*, *we must admire Gods*

Psal 17. 7. Σωῶν τοὺς ἐλπίζοντας. Sept. *Mirifica misericordias tuas*. Vulg.

benignity,

benignity, when we call to minde our calamity: indeed *God* bringeth us *nigh to death*, that we may *know our selves* how fraile and mortall we are, that he may *know us*, or rather *make knowne to us and others* our *graces*, and when we are *nigh to death* he hath *mercy*, that we may *know him*, not onely *speculatively*, but *experimentally*, how *great* and *mighty*, how *good* and *gracious* he is. The truth is, *Omnipotenti medico, nullum vulnus insanabile*, *No wound is incurable to this omnipotent Physitian:* and that he may appeare to be so, he often *deferreth* the cure till *humane* skill and helpe *faileth*. In *such* deliverances, the *characters* of *Gods almighty* goodnesse are *plainly* written so, that the blind *Egyptians* can *read* them; and therefore seeing the *Israelites* escape an imminent danger they acknowledge the *Lord fighteth for them.*

Τunc voluit misericordiæ dei mirificantur cum nobis ad memoriam miseriæ nostræ revocantur. Greg hom. 18. in Ezech.

Nihil extat quod Dei potentiam vincat, nihil quod omnipotenti illi manui obsistere valeat. Sophr. Arch. hom. in Bibl. pat.

In respect of *us*, that the *deliverance* may be the more *acceptable* to *us*, as well as *honourable* to *him*, *To every thing*, saith *Solomon*, *there is a season*, and indeed it is the *season* that putteth a *beauty* upon *every thing*; in this regard, that of the Prophet *quam speciosi*, *how beautifull are the feete of him that bringeth good tidings*, is rendered by *Tertullian*, *quam tempestivi*, *how opportune*, that which is *seasonable* being ever *beautifull*; indeed in every opportune mercy there is a *double* beauty, the *one* in the *thing* conferred, the *other* in the *time* of conferring it. It is the *prayer* of the *Church* to *God*, *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh with thy glorie and thy majesty*, which latter words the *vulgar* latine reads *cum specie tua & pulchritudine tua*, that is to say, *with thy beauty and thy beauty*: and this is then most fully verified, when *God girds his sword* to *defend* his *Church* in her *lowest* misery, and *offend* his *enemies* in their *highest* insolency. It is a *sweet* and choice expression of the *Prophet*, *The Lord will wait that he may be gracious*, which though it be *chiefly* intended of his *forbearing judgement*, yet it is no lesse true of his *withholding mercy*: God therefore oft times *delaying*, that he may *appeare* the *more gracious* in *bestowing* deliverance; so true is that of the *Father*, *Deus cum differt non negat sed commodat dona*, *God in suspending intends not to deny, but onely to commend his mercy.* *Abrahams childe* was more *welcome* at *fourscore*, than if he had been given at *thirty*, and the same

Τὶ τύτυ θαυμαστότερον ἢ μᾶλλον τῆς τῦ θεῦ μεγαλοποιίας τάχιον μᾶλλον ὅταν ἐκ τῶν καίρων θέλη πάσχειν τοῖς πεσήμασι. Greg. Naz. Orat 32.

Isa. 52. 7. Tertul. contra Mar. l. 5. c 2. Psal 45. 3. Isa. 30. 18.

ἦν γὰρ ὅτε ἡ χαλεπότης τοῖς κακοῦσιν ἐπιφέρει· τὴν σωτηρίαν πᾶσαν ἀνθοῖς τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ

Isaac.

ζῆν ἐλπίδα περιαπολωμένην ἤδη τῷ φόβῳ. Cyr. Alex. in Joh. 6. 19.

Isaac had not beene ſo *precious*, had he not been as *miraculouſly reſtored* as *given*. *In fine*, the *language* of a *depopulating* warre is the beſt *rhetorick* to *extoll* the *bleſſing* of *peace*, how *welcome* is a *calme* to the *Marriner* after a *bluſtering* ſtorme? and *health* is never ſo *amiable*, as when it brings *letters of commendation* from a *long* and *dangerous ſickneſſe*.

Eraſm. ſimil.

To apply this, It is a *meditation* which ſhould encourage us to *truſt* in *God*, even when *things* are at the *worſt*, and though all other ſuccours faile, not to let goe our hold of him: As *Apelles* ſtriving to paint a *drop* of *foam* falling from a *Horſes* mouth, after long ſtudy, *deſpairing*, let his *pencill* fall, and that *fall* did it, *Quod aſſequi non potuit caſus expreſſit*, effecting by *chance* what he could not by *art*, and when both *nature* and *art* can goe *no further*, divine *providence* undertaketh, nay, *effecteth* the *worke*, and therefore, as the *Apoſtle* ſaith of *joy*, I ſay of *hope*, *hope alwayes in the Lord*, indeed, *magna indolis eſt ſperare ſemper*, it is an argument of an *heroick* minde, to hope *alwayes*, and of a *pious* minde to place that *hope* on *God*; *David* ſaith of *himſelfe*, I *have hoped in thy word*, the *Septuagint* read it ἐπήλπισα, and the *vulgar* Latine accordingly *ſuperſperavi*, which as S. *Ambroſe* interpreteth it, is *ad ſperandum ſemper creſcere & ſpem ſpei adjungere*, *to add hope to hope*, *& that even then when affliction is added to affliction*: Excellent to this purpoſe is that *counſel* of the *Greeke* Father, *When externall means are leaſt*, *let thy confidence be greateſt*, *for then God diſplayeth his power moſt*, *not at the beginning*, *but when things are deſperate*, *for this is the ſeaſon of divine help*. It is our great *fault* that in *diſmall* dangers we *open* the *eye* of *ſenſe*, and onely *pore* upo the *extremity* of the *trouble*, whereas it becometh a *Saint*, even then to *open* the *eye* of *faith*, and *looke* upon the *energy* of *Gods power*.

Phil. 3. 1. Flor. l. 4. c. 8.

Juſtus ſemper ſperat & in adverſis poſitus & frequentibus afflictus ærumnis deſperationem novit. Ambr. in Pſ. 118. oct. 19.

ὅταν εἰς ἄκαιρον τὰ πράγματα ἐμπέσῃ τότε μάλιστα ἐλπίζε. &c. Chryſ. in Pſal. 117.

And to carry it one ſtep further, Let even the *depth* of *miſery* be an *incouragement* to our *confidence*, in as much as that is a *time* of deliverance: when the *night* is at the *darkeſt*, we know *day-break* is *neareſt*, the *lowneſſe* of the *ebbe* argueth the *flowing* in of the *tide* to be at hand: ſo may we *conclude* divine *ſuccour approaching* from the *premiſſes* of a grievous *calamity encompaſſing*. We read in the *viſion* of the *wheel*, which *Ezekiel*

Ezek. 1. 16.

ſaw

saw there was a wheele in the middest of a wheele, by which two wheeles *Justin Martyr* understandeth the *Jewes captivity* in *Babylon*, and their *restitution* to their owne *Country*, and *one wheele is said to be in the midst of the other*, as if their *returne* were *ingraven* in their very *bondage*, whileſt the *one* gave hope of the *other*. *Strange*, but yet *comfortable* is the *Promiſe*, which *God* maketh to his *Church*, *I will give her the valley of Achor for a doore of hope*. *Achor* ſignifieth *confuſion*, *perturbation*; and yet this will *God* make, *a doore of hope*, whileſt that *perturbation* proveth but a ſad *Prologue* to a joyfull *reſtauration*. *Strange*, but yet *ſtrong* was the *faith* which the *Pſalmiſt* expreſſeth, where he ſaith, *Though an hoſte ſhould encamp againſt me, my heart ſhall not feare, though warre ſhould riſe againſt me, in this will I be confident*: Loe here, a *ſoule* like the *ark* riſing with the waters, the *encamping* of an *hoſte* is *terrible*, and yet *David feareth not*: the *riſing up* of *warre* is yet more dangerous; and *David* will not onely *not feare*, but be *confident*: Nor yet (which is very obſervable) doth he ſay *in God*, but *in this*, that is the very *warre it ſelfe will I be confident*, as knowing, that when the enemy did not onely *encamp about*, but *warre againſt* him (ſo that either *he* muſt *periſh*, or *God* muſt *help*) it would not be long ere the *wiſdome* of the *Almighty* would *finde* out a *way* to *reſcue* him. Not much unlike this, is that reſolution of holy *Job*, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*; *death* and *hope* ſeeme to be at the greateſt *diſtance*, and yet here they are brought *together*: *death* could not *kill Job's hope*, nay, according to *Pagnines* reading of the *Hebrew* text, *Ecce occidet me, behold he will ſlay me*; *death* it ſelfe giveth *life* to his *hope*, and becometh a *prop* for his *confidence*.

Let this be our practiſe at leaſt, *indeavouring* to attaine this *high* pitch of *faith* and dependance on *God*. True it is, if we *behold* the ſad condition of this *Church* at *this day*, we ſhall find many *dying* Symtomes upon it; *Hereſie* hath *poyſoned* it, *Sacriledge ſtarved* it, *Schiſme wounded* it, yea, a licentious *toleration* almoſt *ſtrangled* it: And I doubt not but the *people of God mourne* in ſecret for theſe abominations; and yet (to uſe Saint *Paul's* expreſſions on another occaſion) *Let us not ſorrow as*

δίκτυον τῶ τροχῶ τροχὸν δὲ τῶ τροχῶ μηνύειν δι αὐτῶ τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀπαγωγὴν εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν καὶ ἀπαγωγὴν εἰς τὰ ἴδια. Justin. Mart. qu. 44.

Ibi aperta eſt ſpes ubi facta eſt deſperatio. Hier. ibid. Hoſ. 2. 15.

Pſal. 27. 2. *Si ſurrexerit ſuper me bellum, in illud ego fiducia bo.* Sic legit. Cypr. de exort. Mart.

Job tot gravatus incommodorum acerbitatibus pio Deum cumulabat affectu. Ambr. in Pſal. 118.

1 Theſ. 4. 13.

John 11.4. *without hope*, that this *sickness* of our *Church* (like that of *Lazarus*) shall not be to *death*, but to the *glory* of *God*, when the *set time to have mercy upon Sion shall come*. Againe, it cannot be *denyed* (oh that it were more *lamented*) our *land* is *desolate*, and *nigh* to ruine, the *whole head is sick*, *and the heart is faint*, *from the soale of the foot even to the head there is no soundnesse in it*, *but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores*; and yet *there is hope* in this matter, *confidas quo agit pœnitentiam*, *quia erit tempus salvandi*. Let all penitent *mourners* believe, and *expect a day of salvation*: Finally, none of us but may at some time or other be brought *low*, and in this particular of the *text*, be *sick nigh to death*. Oh let us *treasure* up this *truth*, as a *cordiall* against that *evill* day, and learne, even in our *flourishing* fits, to *incourage our selves in the Lord our God*.

Psal. 102. 13.

Hier. in Pl. 101. Constituit in extrema periculo dem succurrit misericordiæ bonitatis exemplo, quo nos in simili discrimine positi erigamur, scientes Deum non defuturum nostris necessitatibus, etiam in solitudine, modo ad eum precibus confugiamus. Par. in loc. 2 Sam. 30. 2. Gen. 21. 14, 16. Hoc apud Hebræos exivit in proverbium: ut si quando in angustiis constituti sunt & Domini opem anxie implorant dicent in monte Dominus videbit, hoc est sicut Abraha misertus est misereb. & nostri. Hieron in quæst. Hebr. Gen 22, 14. Exod. 2, 5.

And because *examples* are great *incouragements* as well of *faith* as *obedience*, since as we are *incited* to *doe* what *others* have *done*, so we are animated to *hope* what others have *experienced* before us: give me leave to mind you of several *instances* in the *book* of *God*, which *evidence* the *truth* of this comfortable *assertion*.

Were not *Hagar* and her *Sonne* in a *perishing* estate, when turned *out* of *Abrahams house* into a dry *wildernesse*, onely with a *little bread*, and a *bottle of water*, nay, when the *bottle* was *empty* and none to *replenish*? Now it is that *Hagar* giveth her *selfe*, and her *childe*, for *lost*, leaving him under a *bush*, that she might not heare him *cry*, nor see his *death*, and resolving to *spend* the little *remainder* of her owne *dayes* in *teares*. But *loe*, when at this *pinch* an *Angel appeareth*, *openeth* her *eyes*, and instead of a *bottle* she hath a *well* full of *water* for her *dying* and her *Sons* preservation.

Was not *Isaac nigh to death*, when *bound hand* and *foot* yet, *Laid* upon the *Altar*? nay, his *Fathers hand* stretched forth to *take* his *knife* and *cut* his *throat*; it is but a little *while*, and one *streake* had let out *blood* and *life* together. *But see in the mount of the Lord it is seene*, הוה יראה, *God*, as it were from an *ambush*, *calls* unexpectedly from *heaven*, and by a *word* in *season* at once *stops* the *Fathers hand*, and *saves* the *Childes life*.

In what great danger of *death* was *Moses*, when his *parents* laid

laid him by the *rivers* brinke with no other *shelter* but an *arke of bulrushes*: how *likely* is this helplesse *Babe* to be *starved* with *cold*, or *tumbled* into the *river*, or be *devoured* with a wild *beast*? *But behold*, whilest the *childe* is in this imminent *danger*, and the *parents* in perplexing *feare*, *providence* so ordereth it, that *Pharaoh's daughter* becometh as a *mother* to the *child*, and the *childes mother* is appointed to be his *nurse*, whereby his *life* is preserved.

How *nigh* in all probability was the *Israelites destruction*, when *before* them a *Sea*, through which there could be no *wading*, on either *side mountaines*, over which there was no *climbing*, behinde them a mighty *hoste*, *with* whom there is no *contesting*, and yet *from* whom no meanes left of *escaping*. *But loe*, in this *depth* of *misery God* hath *mercy* on them, even to a *miracle*; the *sea divideth*, and at once becometh the Israelites *passage*, and Egyptians *grave*.

How *small* did the *distance* seeme betweene *Jonah* and *death*, when the *mercifull marriners* were *enforced* for *saving* their *owne* lives to *cast* him into the *mercilesse Sea*, and yet there he *sinketh not*, a *divine hand* as it were *holding* him by the *chinne*, when in the *Sea swallowed* by a greedy *whale*, and there hee *dyeth not*; *God* would not *deliver* him from the *tempest*, he will from the *Whale*; that which was most *likely* to *consume* him becometh the *meanes* to *preserve* him, within *three dayes* the *Whale* delivereth him *safe*, *whole*, and *alive* upon dry *ground*.

Who ever *thought* to have seene those *three worthies alive* after they *fell downe bound into the midst of a fiery burning fornace*? *But behold* a *martyrdome effected without dying*, whilest a *fourth like the Sonne of God appeareth*, at whose *command* the *fire forgetteth* to *burne*, or so much as *scorch*.

Who did not *expect* but that *Daniel* being *cast into a denne of* ravenous *Lions*, should be *devoured* before the next *morning*, may, the next *houre*? *But see*, the *Lyons mouthes* are *stopped* by *an Angel*, and since they cannot feed *Daniel*, are forced to *keep a fast* with him.

Were not *Paul* and his *company* in great *jeopardy* of *death*, when the thick *clouds* had for *many dayes* obscured the light of

Quid enim illa tam contingere potuit illi, quæ cum dolore puerum exposuerat, nunc cum gaudio recipit. Fer. Com. Exod 2.8. Exod 14.21. *Aquæ quæ timebantur devorare leviqs famulis dei murus effectæ, non solum pernicies nescivunt, sed & munimen exhibent.* Orig. hom. in Exod. *Pisces vero sustinuit ut Jonam à cete non ex abstergeretur & in totum periret sed ut evomitus magis, subsisteret. Deus enim gloriosius donare quam restituere voluit.* Hieron. ad Pam. l. 3. *O mare quam tu sine passione fallax, fallendo pius, servando sævus, quæ perpetuæ libertatis nescia, neque fas tam ire quam manere vis, devorantem Jonam Scopulo paene similis tuto servas, liberavit leonem*

Sun and *Starres* from them, the violent ſtormes exceedingly toſſed the *Ship*, enforced them to *eaſt* out the *goods*, yea, every *moment* they expect *themſelves* to be made a *prey* to the roring *waves*, *all hope that they ſhould be ſaved being taken away? but behold*, that night *an Angell of God ſtandeth by Paul*, and from *God aſſures him of his and their preſervation.*

To come yet *nearer* to the *inſtance* of the *Text*:

It was no ſlight *ſickneſſe* afflicted *David*, when he ſaid, *My heart panteth, my ſtrength faileth me, as for the light of mine eyes it is gone from me*; the *diſeaſe* (it ſeemeth) had *ſeized* upon all his *ſpirits*, his *animals* in the *dimneſſe* of his *eyes*, his *naturall* in the *failing* of his *ſtrength*, his *vitall* in the *panting* of his *heart*; and ſurely then *it* muſt needes *bring* him very *nigh to death*; yea, it ſeemeth *David feared* it, which made him ſo earneſtly pray againſt it in another *Pſalm*: But when *death* is *neare*, *God* is *neare* too, *hearing* his *prayer*, and *preſerving* his *life*.

It is ſaid of *Hezekiah*, that he was *ſick unto death*, the *diſeaſe* was *ſuch* that he *reckoned his bones ſhould be broken, and an end made of him*, yea, he *received* a *ſentence* of *death* from *God* by the *Prophet*, *Set thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye and not live*: *But* that *threat* was onely like *Abrahams precept*, not a *declaration* of what *God intended* to doe, but onely a *probation* to try what *Hezekiah* would *doe*; and therefore notwithſtanding the *diſeaſe* was *deadly*, *God* becometh his *Phyſitian*, preſcribeth a *plaiſter of figgs*, and *Hezekiah* is *healed*.

The *Centurions* Sonne is viſited with a *Feaver*; that *Feaver* bringeth him to the very *point of death*, when as at the *Centurions* intreaty, *Chriſt* with a *word commands* his *recovery*.

That *womans* condition was *deſperate*, when ſhe was at once brought *low* in *eſtate* and *body*: her *goods* are *gone*, her *diſeaſe* continueth, the *Phyſitians* have *emptied* her *purſe*, but cannot *ſtay* her *flux*, nor is there any likelyhood but that this *ſickneſs* will at length *bring* her to her *grave*. *But* her *deplorable* ſtate is a fit *occaſion* for *Chriſt* to magnifie his *mercy*, whileſt by a *believing touch* of his *garment* he maketh her perfectly *whole*.

Finally, *Martha* ſends *Chriſt* word that *Lazarus is ſick*; *Chriſt delayeth to come*, onely lets her know *this ſickneſſe ſhould be*

ὁ σον πάλαι τὴν φύσιν οὐ περιμαλῶ ἀπώλυντο ἂν ἀλλ' ὁ θέος ἐκώλυσεν. Chryſ. in Act. *Quod genus morbi & naturæ vires attinet prorſus eſſet moriturus niſi ſingulari dei conſilio ſervaretur.* Muſc. in loc. *Solo juſſu ſalutē reddidit qui voluntate omnia creavit.* Greg. Mag. in Evan. hom. 28. *Poſt certamina deſperata medicorum poſt mortis tantum ſpatium ſuſcitare, poſt ſuſcitatum* [illegible] *quis non videt poſſe hoc jam curationem ſibi vindicare quam jam cuncta ſuperaſſe? Sed ut ſubſtantiæ ipſi aliquid reverendum tantus non caſus ſed divinitus occurrit, ut quod humanum, erat non amiſit cujus non pœnæ*

be for Gods glory: being *sick* he *dyeth*, *dying* is *buried*, and having been some dayes *buried* he *rotteth*, nay *stinketh in the grave*; and *now* is the *time* come for *Christ* by his powerfull *voice* to *raise* him from the sleep of *death*, and bed of the *grave*.

Loe here, *more* than a *Jury* of *textuall* witnesses, to which many *more* might be *added* (*besides* this in the *Text*) all *asserting* this *truth*, and thereby *assuring* our *faith* of *Gods deliverance* in the worst *extremity*. To all which give me *leave* to *adde one more*, even my *owne* late *experience* of *Gods marvailous kindenesse* vouchsafed to me.

It is not many *weekes* agoe since it *pleased* the wise *God* to *visit* me with a sore and violent *Feaver*; that *Feaver* so *exhausted* my *spirits*, and *enervated* my *body*, that I might well *take* up *Davids* expression, *There was but a step betweene me and death*: Much about that *time* when the *dayes* of the *yeare* are at the *longest*, the *dayes* of my *life* seemed to be at the *shortest*. Thus was the *first* part of this *Text verified*, *I was sick nigh to death*, indeed *so nigh*, that I was *as a dead* man in the *opinion* of the *learned*, yea, actually *dead* and *buried* in the *report* of the *vulgar*, and truly I had *ere this* beene not onely *foure dayes* with *Lazarus*, but *more* than *four weeks putrifying* in the *grave*, had not *divine goodnesse* prevented: *But God had mercy on me*, and so the *other part* of my *Text* is likewise fulfilled: when the *sickenesse* had almost *weighed* me downe into the *pit*, *God* was pleased to *put* a *graine* of *mercy* and *turne* the *scale*, so that *I* am here (beloved) *this day*, before *God*, *Angels*, and *men*, as a *bird escaped* out of a strong *snare*, as a *prey plucked* out of the *jawes* of a devouring *Lion*, as a *brand snatched* out of the *fire* of a burning *feaver*.

What therefore *remaineth*, but that as in the *beginning*, so now in the *close* of this *discourse* I *take* up a *gratulation*, *Bless the Lord oh my soul, and let all that is within me praise his holy name*; when I *forget* to *mention this deliverance*, *let my right hand forget its cunning*; when I *cease* (as *opportunity* offereth it selfe) to *publish this mercy*, *let my tongue cleave to the roofe of my mouth*; nor yet would *I* be *alone* in this work of *praise*; do *you* (all you here present) *joyne* with me. I doubt not but *many*, the *most*, nay

it, *sola fide & humilitate servetur*. Chrysol. Serm. 33.

Videtis quemadmodum dia locum mortis, licentiam dat sepulchro, corruptioni posse permittit, negat nil putrescini, nil fœtori: atque ut Tartarus rapias, trahas, habeat, admittit, atque agit, ut humana species tota pereat, ea tota vis mortis tanæ desperationis accedat, quatenus quod futurum est divinum sit, non humanum. Chrysol. serm. 63.

2 Sam 20. 3. *June* the 10. my disease was at the highest.

Psal. 103. 1. 137. 5, 6.

nay all of you in some kinde, at some *time* or other, have had *experience* of eminent *deliverances*: oh *call* them now to *mind*, & let your gratefull *remembrance* come up as a *memoriall before the Lord*: I doubt not but *many* of you, yea, *very many*, did *put* up *prayers*, fervent prayers at the *throne of grace* for this *mercy* (which I now *celebrate*) my *recovery*. Indeed *brethren*, I look upon my *health*, as S. *Paul* on his *preservation*, as a *gift bestowed on me by the meanes* (to wit, for the sakes and prayers) *of many*; and surely as *prayers* have been *made*, so fit it is *thanksgiving* should be *returned* by *many* on *my behalfe*, it were a *shame* to be *zealous* in *begging* and *cold* in *blessing*; to *cry* aloud *give us our dayly bread*, and onely *whisper hallowed be thy name*. 2 Cor. 1. 11.

Blessed therefore be the *Lord God* of his unworthy servant, *who alone doth wondrous things*; yea, *blessed be his glorious name for ever*, and let all that have beene *petitioners for* me *say with* me at *least* in their *hearts*, *Amen*, *Amen*. Psal. 72. 18, 19.

And now my *Dearly beloved Parishioners*, *and freinds in the Lord*, what is my *desire*, but that *you* may have *cause* in *allusion* to the following *words* of this *verse*, to say, *God had mercy*, *not on him onely*, *but us also*; that *my preservation* may be for *your edification*, as well for *my consolation*: that *you*, who have *already* found *benefit* by my weak *Ministery*, may be more *strengthned*; and those, who have heretofore been *unprofitable*, may now be *bettered*. Which that it may be so, it shall be *my endeavour*; let it be *your prayer* for me, *that I may doe the workes of Christ more diligently and faithfully than ever*; it shall be *my prayer* for you, let it be *your endeavour* to *heare the Word of Christ more attentively and obediently for the time to come*. So shall *you* have *cause* to *blesse God* for *me*, and *I* to *blesse God* for *you*. Yea at that *last* and great *day* you shall have *joy* in *me*, if my *preaching* become a *meanes* of your *conversion* and *salvation*; and *I* shall have *joy* in *you*, whose *conversion* and *salvation* shall prove an *increase* of my *reward*, and an *addition* to my *glorie*. Which God grant, &c.

FINIS.